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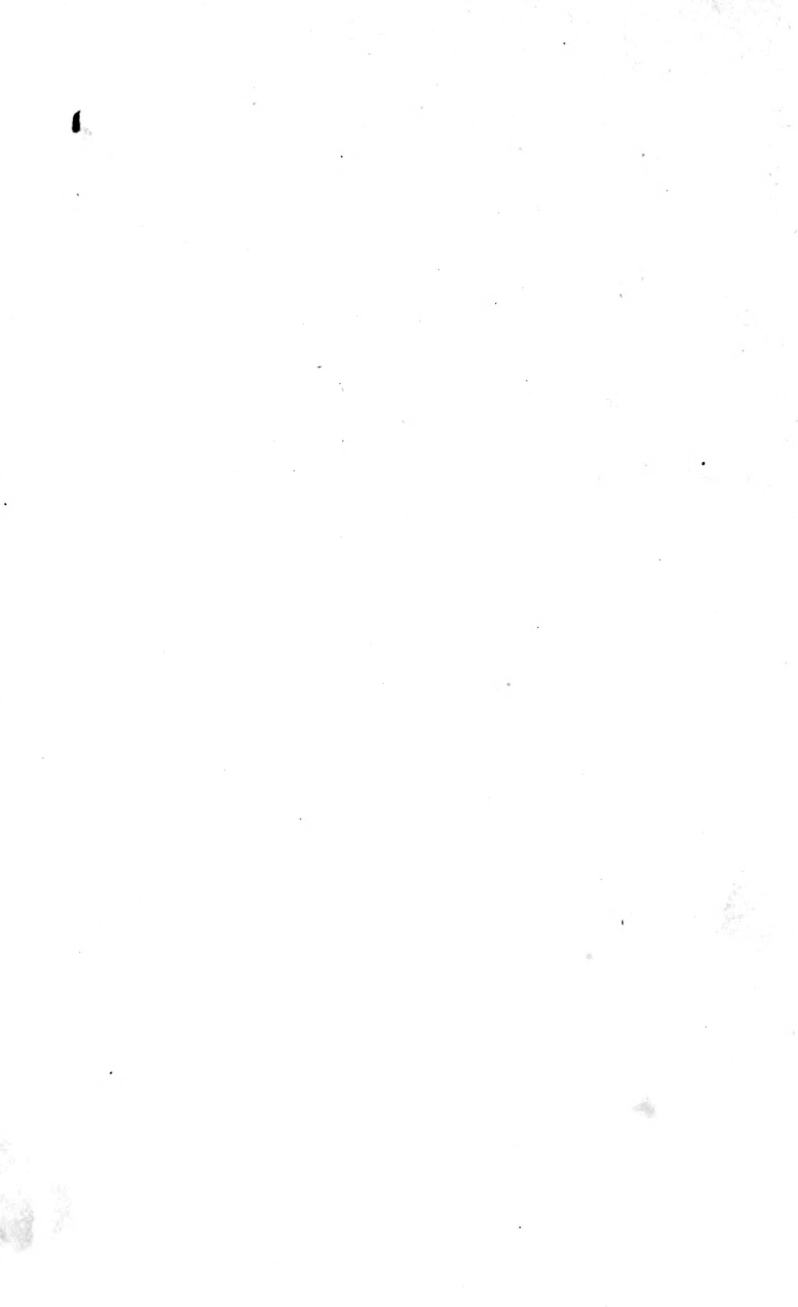
POEMS  
AND  
SONGS



JAMES BLACK CAMERON  
F.E.S.







POEMS AND SONGS.

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# POEMS AND SONGS.

BY

JAMES BLACK CAMERON, F.E.I.S.,

GRANGEMOUTH.



WILLIAM P. NIMMO,  
LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

1877.

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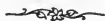
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## P R E F A C E.



**J**AMES BLACK CAMERON, eldest son of the late John Cameron, engineer, was born in Greenock on the 6th October 1833. While still a child, his family removed to London; but on the death of his father in Jamaica they returned to Scotland, and settled in Glasgow. Up to this time his education had been carried on at home by his mother, a woman of considerable mental power. Being now ten years of age, his friends thought that the time had come when he should be sent to school. He was accordingly enrolled as a pupil in the Normal School, and for upwards of three years studied under Mr Hislop, the head-master. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed as an engineer in the Vulcan Foundry, Port Dundas; but before six months had passed, his right arm was accidentally caught by some machinery, and so mangled that amputation of the hand was necessary. Unable now to prosecute a trade, he returned to the Normal School,

and under the tuition of the head-master, Mr Forbes, now of Dumfries Academy, made such progress that at the early age of seventeen he received an appointment as assistant to the late Mr Craig, of the Glasgow Industrial Schools ; and about a year thereafter he was elected teacher of Springbank School. Although prior to this he had shown a strong tendency to literature, it was at this time that its pursuit became an absorbing passion.

Conducting a large school, with little assistance, during the day, and an evening school for five nights in the week, would be considered sufficient work for any man ; but the love of literature was so strong within him that his studies were often carried on till early morning. This could not continue. His health gave way. He resigned his situation, and for six months he was confined to the house. During this enforced retirement he applied himself to the study of the Spanish language, intending to go out to an uncle in South America, for the sake of his health ; but his uncle dying, this design had to be abandoned. It now became a serious question what he should do ; whether he should devote himself entirely to literature, or resume teaching. He accordingly wrote to Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, enclosing a specimen of his work, stating his position, and asking for advice. To this a very complimentary and kind reply was received, advising him to continue his studies, but not

to abandon his profession until he had made such a name in literature as would secure him against the necessity of becoming a literary hack. Shortly afterwards he received an appointment to Hollandbush School, near Denny, where for five years he taught so successfully that very great regret was felt when he accepted his last situation, the mastership of Grangemouth Subscription School.

During all this time he was storing his mind from the treasures of Spanish ballad and Norse legend ; yet he never ceased to cultivate his powers as a writer, both of prose and of poetry ; and his contributions were frequent, not only to the columns of the local papers, but also to those of Edinburgh and Glasgow. Had he devoted himself entirely to literature, he would doubtless have won for himself a high position among the writers of this country. But working all day in a worrying and mind-fagging profession, his productive powers were limited ; but yet he has produced some pieces which we venture to predict will live.

He died at Grangemouth on the 22d of May 1876, leaving a widow and two children.

At the urgent request of many friends this volume—a selection from his poetical compositions—has been issued.





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## P O E M S.

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### EVENING HYMN.

EVENING'S shades, as daylight fades,  
Mantle sadly earth and sea ;  
The holy hour, with solemn power,  
Bids us lift our voice to Thee.  
Giver Thou of light and gloom,  
Lord of life and of the tomb,  
Hear us, mighty Father, aid us !  
Let Thy wings of power o'ershade us !  
Keep us ! guide us !  
In Thy well-proven mercy hide us.  
Children of the second birth,  
We are feeble, frail, unstable ;  
Thou alone to help art able.  
Guide us, aid us, overshadow us,  
As the evening shades the earth.



## FLOWER IDYLLS.

### NO. I.—THE WATER LILIES.

ALL noon I loitered in the sheltering wood,  
And listened to the gnat's incessant hum,  
Wooing me to a dreamful, drowsy mood ;  
But when the arrows of the sun were come  
West-slanted, I o'erstrode the heathy slopes,  
Upward and upward, till I crossed the hill ;  
Then down and down, on to the hazel copse  
That borders the broad stream, and there stood still  
Beside the Water Lilies.

Out in the midstream, strong and smooth and deep,  
With an unceasing hiss in undertone,  
The main mass of the water holds its sweep  
As if one thought—one earnest thought alone—  
Were its ;—a restless longing for the sea—  
A fierce impatience for the unknown end ;

But at the edge, as gentle as can be,  
 The broken currents interfuse and blend  
 Among the Water Lilies.

The wooing wave crisps in around their petals,  
 And dallies with their broad fronds as it goes ;  
 And every moment languidly unsettles  
 The silver water-stars' serene repose.  
 But on, and on, and on—for ever, ever—  
 The river runs—for ever on and on—  
 The fresh wave comes, and fresh the sedges shiver,—  
 New wooers follow, when the old are gone,  
 To the white Water Lilies.

“ Ah me ! ” I said, with misty eyes and grave,  
 “ I am a rootless weed that floats away,  
 And passes onward with the passing wave,  
 Powerless to seek a haven, or to say,  
 I am weary, but I've found a rest—  
 Here will I stay and let the waves run by—  
 Our labour turns to naught, 'tis surely best  
 To be in quiet under the quiet sky,  
 Like the white Water Lilies.”

And when the moon came out, I lingered still ;  
 And when the stars were high I yet was there,  
 Dreaming sweet fancies with an unchecked will,  
 And memories sadder, but not less as fair,

And not the less as dear ; of vanished joys,  
And sorrows softened by the touch of time ;  
And in my dream the flowers took up a voice,  
And the voice shaped itself into the rhyme  
Of the white Water Lilies.

“ Of perfect motion cometh perfect rest,  
And rest is the appointed end and welcome close ;  
We loll upon the wave, and, wave caressed—  
Lulled by the unreposing to repose—  
Reck not how days may go, and come and go ;  
We take the sunbeams, be they slant or steep ;  
At noon we sun us in the noontide glow,  
At eve we fold our petals up and sleep.”  
So sang the Water Lilies.

“ The wave flows on—flows on, but we are here ;  
The wave flows on—flows on, but we are still ;  
We catch the 'wildered current in our sphere,  
And shape its wildness to our languid will.  
We yield—and, yielding, rule. When waves are high  
With rain-streams from the hills, we rise with them ;  
And when they fail beneath the summer sky,  
With them sinks down each starry anadem  
Of the white Water Lilies.

“ And if the flood comes down, roaring and red,  
Angrily tossing back its hoary mane,

We fold our leaves together, and are hid,  
Till it return to gentleness again.  
So takes the meek the mastery of the stern,  
O'ercome of all—o'ercoming all at length—  
Safe in its lowliness—so we discern  
That in our perfect weakness lies our strength."  
So teach the Water Lilies.

And lo! the dreamy rhythm in my soul  
Gave to my soul a dreamy sense of calm,  
Cooling Hope's fever—lulling Memory's dole,  
Soothing and quiet as the evening psalm  
Which breathes of labour done, and rest beneath  
Night's brooding wings, with drowsy softness lined :  
So musing, I went upwards o'er the heath,  
With many a pause, and many a look behind  
At the white Water Lilies.

---

NO. II.—THE FORGET-ME-NOTS.

*"Sis Memor Mei."*

Respectfully inscribed to Alexander Thomson, Esq., Ochilview.

THE song itself is nothing :—but the name  
To which it dares to be inscribed, must claim  
Unsullied honour. Whether in the mart  
Of commerce, or when taking daily part  
In the amenities of life, his heart

Beats nobly, far removed from aught that is  
Sordid, or mean, or selfish. Therefore this  
Poor essay of my muse I put beneath  
The ægis of his name, that it may breathe,  
In some reflected sort, the atmosphere  
Of his most genial nature, warm and clear.

Where the fernsprays bend their arches,  
Underneath the tasselled larches—  
Where the fretted ripples swerve,  
In the streamlet's sudden curve—  
Where the noonday glare of summer  
Filters through the leafy screen,  
Cooler—tenderer—welcomer—  
Toned down to a golden green—  
There, in that delicious spot,  
Met I this old friend of mine,  
Love's own token, Hope's own sign ;—  
Gold and blue Forget-me-not.

It holds up to the sun no flaunting chalice,  
With purple or with crimson streaked and starred :  
And from its open golden heart there sallies  
No scent of myrrh, of cassia, or of nard.

Not tulip-like, a Cleopatra, sailing  
In pomp and glory, adown Cydnus' wave—  
An Imogene it seems, forsaken, hiding  
Its tender beauty in Bellarius' cave.

No musky odour—no entrancing splendour—  
 To thrill and thrall the overmastered sense ;  
 But with a quiet and infinitely tender,  
 Most graceful and most gracious influence,  
 Its blossoms from their humble haunts express  
 The gospel of a self-sufficing lowliness.

Five tiny oval petals—heavenly blue—  
 Bend in a circlet round a golden eye ;  
 And that sad legend—old, and ever new—  
 Has consecrated it, for aye, to lie  
 Close hid and cherished in the inner deeps,  
 Where memory's holiest shrine her dearest treasure  
 keeps.

Yes! of all legends floating  
 Down the River of the Years,  
 No one know I worthier noting  
 Than that tale of truth and tears—  
 Which the teller of must say low,  
 In a tone that faltereth—  
 Hallowed by the double halo,  
 Each divine, of Love and Death.

“By the streamlet walked the lovers, in the olden  
 German land ;  
 By the streamlet, where its current undermined the  
 fretted strand ;

In the tender hush of twilight, ere the bashful star of  
Love  
Left its soft concealment by the flush of daylight's sun-  
beams wove.

“Downcast were the maiden's glances, timidly she  
looked aside,  
Golden-eyed and azure-petalled, there these blossoms  
she espied  
On a jutting bank bold-hanging: it would almost seem  
they knew  
Danger waited on the footstep that should venture  
where they grew.

“Scarcely had she praised their beauty, ere the eager  
hand of love  
Sought to seize the fatal blossoms, as they tempting  
hung above ;  
Seized them—but the treacherous footing failed him,  
and the river's swirl  
Bore him in its eddy under, from the horror-stricken  
girl.

“ Battling with the current bravely, battling bravely  
but in vain,  
Love's last thought was for the loved one—Hope must  
part and Faith remain.



One convulsive effort made he, ere the wave its prey  
 had got,  
 Flung the flowers in safety shoreward, crying, ' Love,  
 forget me not.'

"And since then this tiny blossom, Constancy and  
 Hope have claimed  
 As their own peculiar emblem, and FORGET-ME-NOT  
 have named."

From its blue petals, from its golden centre,  
 Stream subtle, viewless, but all-potent spells—  
 Magnetic influences, which pierce and enter  
 The grey coils of the brain where Memory dwells.

The wind came freshly through the leafy shadow;  
 The voice of birds came through the woodland maze;  
 The scent of new-mown hay came o'er the meadow—  
 And o'er my heart a dream of bygone days.

Days of my boyhood by the wooded Kelvin;  
 Days in the Schiftwood, where the rocks are piled  
 In chaos-order, steep, abrupt, and shelving;  
 Days by the Gryffeside, in its dingles wild:

Days in the ancient Caledonian forest,  
 Where Cadzow's crumbling castle hangs o'er Avon,  
 Like a hawk's nest, upon the steepest, hoarest,  
 Storm-shattered cliff, above the torrents raving:

Days up in Garrel glen, with moss and heather  
Seen through the vistas of the coppice-path:  
Days at the Hermitage, in rainy weather,  
When Carron Fall raised up its voice in wrath:—

All these unrolled in mental panorama,  
There, by the Millhaugh Burn, in that quiet nook;  
And all the voices of life's double drama  
Were blended with the brawling of the brook.

Forget me not! The past is ever present,  
'Tis ever with us—nay, it is ourselves!  
Not fugitive, and no wise evanescent—  
Not merely stored in books on History's shelves—

But throbbing, pulsing, through the veins and tissues  
(Yesterday's food is muscle of to-day),  
Working in darkness to appointed issues—  
A noon evolved from out a dawning grey.

O'er the dead so gently sleeping,  
Wherefore rear the storied stone?  
But because we would be keeping  
Back from blank Oblivion,  
For however brief a space—  
In however small a spot—  
The memory of a name and race,  
Which have been and now are not:

And whose blood, like Abel's, crying  
From the dust, denies denying,  
In our ears for ever sighing,  
"Forget me not! Forget me not!"

Vain hope! but not without its compensation;  
If Love and Joy must share Oblivion's lot,  
Yet not the less shall Grief and Desolation  
Pass into nothingness and be forgot.

"Forget us not!" should rather be *our* exclamation,  
We shall join them, but never they return.  
Vainer, ah! vainer, is their aspiration  
Than ours who, many a time and often, yearn  
To share their stillness and partake their rest,  
Rather than wrestle with the hollow-hearted  
Schemer and schemes, whose purpose stands confessed,  
Till, sick of life, we murmur, "Blest, oh, blest,  
The lot of those who lie among the Old Departed!"

"Forget me not!" ah, strong but foolish yearning!  
Outcome and end of this fond egotism of ours.  
Does Earth remember at the Spring's returning  
Last year's fallen leaves—last year's departed  
flowers?

## NO. III.—THE TULIP.

“Whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but”——

TRUDGING along, my stick and I,  
On the summer pathway, hot and dry,  
Between grey hedges, all bedight  
With a powder of road-dust, like a blight ;—  
A dirty green and a dirty white  
Blended, until the aching sight,  
Weary of hedgerow and weary of road,  
Looked up to the pitiless, blue, and broad  
Expanse of sky, with glare o'erflowed !—  
And felt relief, as sometimes flows  
From flying from petty griefs to those  
Whose very weight of mastering woes  
Deadens and numbs all meaner throes  
    Under an overmastering load—  
All at once a short, quick turning  
Brought me, without hint or warning,  
Sudden as a tropic morning,  
Unforeseen by me unknowing,  
Where a Tulip Bed was glowing.

With a glad surprise prevailing,  
O'er the painted rustic paling  
Leaned I, eager-eyed, and hailing

Beauty's very self and presence  
 In the shimmering iridescence.  
 Through the dainty lattice fretwork  
 (Delicate as fairy network),  
 Fringed round with an emerald border,  
 Level, with the scythe's late traces,  
 Burning in the sunlight's ardour—  
 Bowing to the wind's embraces—  
 Grew the Tulips, in emblazure,  
 Crimson, purple, golden, azure.

In the west breeze, swaying, tossing,  
 Bending, interlaced, and crossing,  
 Showing, at each shift and slope,  
 More tints than the kaleidoscope,  
 While the leaves and stems were seen  
 Toning in a tender green,  
 The ripple kept on pulsing, flushing,  
     Change and motion all incessant—  
 Amethystine-violet blending  
 With the ruby's blood-red blushing—  
 Sapphire's vivid gleam contending  
     With the opal iridescent.  
 Burning, gleaming, shifting, quivering—  
 On the emerald background shivering,  
 Danced the streaks—now bright—now duller—  
 As the wavering wealth of colour

Moved, as moves a maiden's tresses,  
In the west wind's warm caresses,  
When it woos them, in its ardour,  
Into daintiest disorder.

With the eye to overflowing  
Filled with beauty, flushed and glowing,  
With the soul bedazed—entranced—  
In the splendour there that glanced,  
I stood gazing, with no heed on  
Aught, save this small glimpse of Eden—  
Till the sense's self-compulsion  
Wrought a suddenest revulsion—  
Till the feeling's very excess

Dulled itself and died full-sated,  
Like an appetite whose press  
Fails before a wish o'errated.

"Faugh," said I, "the illusion's gone!"  
And turning set me to depart;  
"O Tulip, eye-server, eye-pleaser alone,  
Scentless art thou, and black in the heart."

Flaunt up, gaudy Delilah of flowers,  
Daintily symbol the soul of the age—  
The glitter and glare of this time of ours,  
With its Mammon-worship and golden rage.  
The Pharisee's shibboleth has grown stale—  
"Stand aside, I am holier than thou."

*Vae Victis*—with gold in the other scale,  
'Tis "Stand aside, I am richer"—now.  
The Bible is put on the upper shelf,  
The bank-book takes its place in the heart ;  
Men "make themselves," and worship that self,  
And show rules alike in the church and the mart.

Trample the violet under foot—  
It only emblems modest worth :  
The pure white lilies uproot—uproot—  
They merely crowd and cumber our earth :  
The care of the age is not for these,  
The scentless tulip-beds better please—  
Tinsel and gaud, and gold and blood,  
Fair-seeming lies and hypocrisies,  
Sanctified sin and painted mud—  
These be thy gods, O Israel, now ;  
Bow to them, Mammonish worldlings, bow !  
But not for ever. How long, how long,  
Shall we bear the rule of the gilded wrong ?  
Bring forth, O Asked of God, thy sword,  
And hew this Agag before the Lord !





## AN APOCALYPSIS.

“ Verum ego non tam aliis legem ponam, quam legem vobis meæ propriæ mentis exponam : quam qui probaverit, teneat : cui non placuerit, abjeciat.”  
—*Petrarch, De Vita Solitaria, lib. i., tract iv., c. 4.*

CLOSER and nearer still, Annie ! closer and nearer still !  
See, the twilight sky grows greyer, and the twilight air  
grows chill,  
And the fir-wood lies as black as death in the shadow  
of the hill.

It is the holy time of earth, and softly everywhere  
The baptism of the gentle dew hallows the scented air,  
And the lilies stoop their stately heads as if they bent  
in prayer :  
Straight up above through a jagged cleft is a belt of  
intensest blue,  
An angel's path, besprinkled with a bashful star or two ;  
And we are alone in the garden—alone, love—I and  
you.



Closer and nearer yet, Annie! closer and nearer  
yet!

My hair is flecked with grey, darling! yours is black  
as jet;

My face is somewhat sadly stern—the lines are firm  
and set;

While yours is fresh as a rosebud, with the dews of  
morning wet:

And your heart is full and joyous as the May-day  
song of birds;

Yet your trustful eyes have said, and your low-  
whispered words,

That you love me, darling—love me! though sad and  
worn and grey;

And the old church chimes to-morrow morn ring out  
our marriage-day!

Let us sit down here, Annie—here, under the bee-  
loved lime,

While I tell an old, old story—told for the thousandth  
time.

Many a day ago, Annie, by the grey, hungry sea,  
There was an ivied cottage under a sycamore tree,  
With a dainty-latticed porch and a quaint old pointed  
roof;

And I saw it—and all in it—through a veil of fairy-  
woof.

To idle eyes 'twas but a cottage by the old brown  
sea-strand ;

But to me it was haloed with the light of the Elfin land,  
For a potent witch lived in it—a lady, young and fair,  
With the starlight prisoned in her eyes, and the sun-  
beams in her hair.

Why linger? we were much together (nay, darling, do  
not start) ;

I loved her—yes, yes, Annie ! I loved her with all  
my heart !

I was faint with the thirst of love—like Moor, mirage-  
beguiled ;

It was many a day long since, love ! and my heart  
was foolish and wild—

Many a day long since, Annie ; when you were but a child.

She was older by two summers, but her light and joy-  
ous tone

Made the years that had flown o'er her seem less than  
were my own ;

For I was always somewhat sad, and though the brow  
be smooth,

The irk of thought will overveil in part the bloom of  
youth.

And we were much together ; and she knew of my love,  
For a thousand things can speak, though the shy lips  
will not move.

And many a nameless token seemed confirmation  
plain,  
That if I dared to dream of her my dreaming was not  
vain.  
Yes, love ! I thought—woe's me ! I thought that I  
was loved again !

Closer, darling ! closer to me. What did the lady  
care,  
So that her pride might be fed fat, what sorrow I  
should bear ?  
She played with my heart as the wind with the tangles  
of your hair ;  
But I lay lapped in my love-lulled sleep—in my Delilah  
dream—  
Holding yesterday as naught, to-morrow of small  
esteem,  
So that to-day the sky was bright, over love's summer  
stream !

But I awoke one day, darling ! and it was in this  
wise—  
The scene has many a time since then sprung up be-  
fore my eyes—  
At the summer eventide, as wont, I went to be with  
her,  
And the cottage was alive with a murmur and a  
stir :

At the door stood little Helen, the lady's blue-eyed  
sister ;

We were great friends—the child and I—and, bending  
down, I kissed her.

“That's two to-day” she lisped—“one from Frank  
and one from you ;

I shall be rich in kisses soon ; come into the parlour  
—do.

They're all in there—Frank and them all.” I passed  
into the room,

And through my heart there shot a chill, and o'er my  
eyes a gloom ;

And the sunshine lost its glory, and the summer lost  
its bloom.

This was her sailor-lover—abroad for many a day.

They had been troth-plighted, Annie ! before he went  
away ;

Yet, with this bond upon her, the coquette's black,  
hollow heart

Could feign the blush and smile of love with a cool,  
accursed art—

Could lure the trusting soul o'er a false and fatal track,  
And wake a music in my breast she ne'er could echo  
back.

And she was to be his bride, love ! ere many days  
were o'er—

For it was not long at a time that he could stay ashore.

The very eve before he came, under the starlight cool,  
We walked in the whispering oak-shade, and my soul  
of souls was full

With a passionate adoration and a fond and credulous  
trust ;

Hope's upward-pointing wings dreamed naught of the  
defiling dust.

Soft-voiced was the lady and gracious. We parted  
with a kiss ;

But not a word of the morrow's comer—never a word  
of this !

I sat there, marble-masked in face that not a line could  
swerve,

With a lazy lip-smile, and a chain upon each quivering  
nerve.

I bade the bridegroom welcome gay, with some faint  
touch of ruth—

I praised the lady's beauty—I praised her faith and truth ;  
I chattered with a careless scorn, and home the words  
were driven

In that bland tone which cannot be resented—nor  
forgiven ;

And, to the devil in my heart, it was enjoyment rich  
To catch her half-appealing look, and the quick, con-  
vulsive twitch

That writhed in the corners of her mouth—in all her  
will's despite.

I do regret it. Gentleness is ever truest might.

I was wont to leave them with "Good-night ;" "Good-bye" I bade them now.

Smiling, and scoffing, and shaking hands, with an ice-cold, ice-smooth brow,

Forth from the disenchanted land I passed into the night,  
Where the cold, broad sea lay moaning in the wan  
and ghostly light.

My heart was all benumbed, in a transient, pulseless sleep,

Like the crouching lion's pause ere he takes his deadly leap—

Voiceless and hushed, and numbed, and still, as it could never wake—

Still ! ay, as earth is still, till the crashing thunders break.

The loss of accustomed wealth, and the view of present death,

Will cramp and load the stifled breast till it draw a 'bated breath ;

Yet still the true heart's dauntless will has power within itself

To front the shadowy terror, and to scorn the vanished pelf.

Friends part and perish, Annie ! and the heart is stricken sore,

Yet the empty fountain fills, and the void is void no more ;

But when faith is smote to death, and the once all-  
cloudless sky  
Grows murky with the lethal gloom of the incarnate lie,  
Then a vague and shapeless fear has birth, and a gnaw-  
ing doubt springs up,  
And each heart's spring is made deadly by deceit's  
envenomed cup.

When earth hath lost this primal truth Heaven only can  
redeem.

I have no memory of that night save as a hideous dream  
Of tossings, and groanings, and tears, and sights and  
sounds of dread,  
And fierce repinings, and mad prayers that I were  
with the dead ;  
And a horror of the darkness and its visions of affright—  
Till the day broke in sunshine, and then I cursed the  
light.

Yet though nigh wounded unto death, with many an  
aching scar,  
My soul came forth victorious from the torturing  
heart-war ;  
For the burning love that had been my very life of life,  
Was thrown in the deadly wrestle of that terrible night's  
strife,  
And cast aside and spurned by the indomitable will.  
But though the venomed shaft was drawn, the wound  
kept rankling still.

The waves rave out their strength and lull, and the  
mad waves rest again ;

But the tall ship's thick-ribbed timbers, and her costly  
stuffs and men

No more shall find the haven, where the watchers  
watch in vain.

A chaos of chafed and shapeless shreds, it strews the  
watery way—

Like a veil of horror drawn 'twixt the sea and the con-  
scious day.

Haggard, and wan, and leaden-eyed—even of hope  
forlorn—

And hope is long and loth to leave the heart in which  
'tis born—

I left the place so woful now—an Eden but of late—  
Borne up by the sustaining strength of that disdainful hate  
That dares to take the doubtful odds and match itself  
with Fate.

The days went by, the weary days—a long and laggard  
train ;

With little respite from my woe—small healing of my  
pain ;

For I sought the healing in myself—in myself I placed  
the trust ;

But vain the hope ; and vain the help sought from the  
son of dust.



I found his loudliest-vaunted goods but tawdry,  
tinselled ills ;  
Till, from the grim valley of death, I looked up to the hills  
Whence the aid cometh ; and it came, and the long  
war was o'er ;  
Then peace fell on the vexing thoughts, and balm on  
the aching sore.

And not alone the inner life was soothed and harmonised ;  
But earth resumed the pristine bloom that once  
emparadised ;  
And a new sense of beauty, and music, and delight  
Stirred through my soul, like the first breathings of the  
young spring's might ;  
And the rapture of happy tears could visit the long-  
stern eyes,  
As they greeted the voice and view of waters, and  
fields, and skies.  
In my heart upsprung the flower of love, and blossomed  
fair anew ;  
And a fresh hope nursed it, and baptized it with its  
holiest dew—  
For, in the flush of the flower-time, darling ! I met with you.

The outward grace of form and face, and your pure  
soul's dear worth,  
Are blended like the promised bridal of the heavens  
and earth,

Where heaven stoops lovingly to earth and earth soars  
up to heaven.

“Have I forgiven the lady?”

Yes ; as I hope to be forgiven.

The perfect love that casts out fear casts out all hatred  
too.

If I bore hate to aught on earth I could not so love you.  
*To be* most just and wisest, Heaven doth not seek alone,  
But wills and works so that our souls shall be con-  
strained to own

That it *is* most just and wisest. Our path is mercy-  
strewn !

The clouds that move our peevish gall to such repin-  
ings vain

Are treasure-houses to upstore the soft and gracious  
rain ;

And the chill that falls at evening, when the sultry day  
is through,

Solaces all the heat-faint earth with the softness-  
breathing dew.

Look up to the heavens, Annie ! The clouds' em-  
battled host,

Where is it now ? On the far verge of the horizon lost ;  
And the broad unwrinkled brow of the calm old  
solemn night,

With its ineffable depth, and serenity, and might,  
Is softened into tenderness by the young moon's light ;

And the stars smile down their blessing on the happy,  
dreaming flowers,  
And brightest of all is the lover's star—be the fair  
omen ours





AN ADDRESS OF WELCOME TO  
THOMAS BROWN, ESQ.

AND you're back to Bankier,  
Tom Brown, Tom Brown,  
With your lines and your rod and such gear,  
Tom Brown.  
For a trout you would fish ;  
Faith, we know that's the wish  
That gives us your presence out here,  
Tom Brown.

Your whiskers are grown,  
Tom Brown, Tom Brown ;  
And you're not just so barefaced, I own,  
Tom Brown.  
And your velvet skull-cap  
Is still sporting its nap—  
People take their nap off you alone,  
Tom Brown.

And you'll fish, and you'll fish,  
Tom Brown, Tom Brown ;  
And that luck may ensue we all wish,  
Tom Brown ;  
For a struggle so hard  
Sure deserves some reward.  
May you never want meat in your dish,  
Tom Brown.

But some folk we see,  
Tom Brown, Tom Brown,  
As perhaps you yourself may be,  
Tom Brown,  
And the trout which you look,  
May be caught "with a hook"  
With which real anglers do not agree,  
Tom Brown.

But go in and win,  
Tom Brown, Tom Brown ;  
You're not over thin in the skin,  
Tom Brown ;  
You can stand a good rub—  
I don't mean in the tub—  
As long as folk keep off the tin,  
Tom Brown.

Though a tile should be loose,  
                 Tom Brown, Tom Brown,  
 To let every one know that's no use,  
                 Tom Brown.  
 If you'd make it your plan  
 To look like a man,  
 All the world wouldn't know you're a goose,  
                 Tom Brown.

Since the Boards heard your prayers,  
                 Tom Brown, Tom Brown,  
 Give up your sulks and your airs,  
                 Tom Brown.  
 Think the folks that you view  
 Are as good just as you,  
 And don't laugh every time a cat stares,  
                 Tom Brown.

Watch your health, d'ye see,  
                 Tom Brown, Tom Brown ;  
 Just think what a loss you would be,  
                 Tom Brown.  
 How the world would get on  
 If you should be gone  
 Is a question that quite staggers me,  
                 Tom Brown.

There's a spec, be it known,  
    Tom Brown, Tom Brown,  
When a profit immense could be shown,  
    Tom Brown,  
To buy you in a trice  
At other folk's price,  
And sell you again at your own,  
    Tom Brown.

The men'll be glad,  
    Tom Brown, Tom Brown ;  
A glass or two now can be had,  
    Tom Brown.  
You're the broth of a boy,  
You like to see joy ;  
They'll be drinking your health like mad,  
    Tom Brown.

---

### TO A COQUETTE.

WHY should I waste my heart on one  
Who will not waste one thought on me ;  
The lamp of Love is not the sun  
To give out heat unceasingly ;  
'Twill fail at length and cease to burn,  
If it can meet with no return.

But trimmed by Hope, its gentle light  
How brightly warm—how warmly tender,  
Illumining our sorrow's night  
With an overwhelming flush of splendour ;  
Till, like heaven's sunshine, it makes bright  
All nature with its blessed light.

Oh, what is heaven without a star,  
And what is life if love be wanting ?  
And what can love be if there are  
No gentle hopes to ease its panting ?  
And what hope is there left to me  
If that my love be scorned by thee ?

But, oh, this chilling weight of fear  
Which will not leave me, will not leave me ;  
And those false hopes I cherished dear,  
Which flattered only to deceive me ;  
And then the bitter, bitter pain  
Of wrenching back my heart again.

Back, back again, before too late,  
With one deep struggle to be free ;  
But I have strength to meet my fate,  
How dark soe'er that fate may be.  
The keenest grief, the deepest scorn,  
Is conquered when it's bravely borne.



Oh thou who shinest too fatally fair,  
Brightest, and best, and only dearest,  
Canst thou be moved by fondest prayer?  
Hear me and pity when thou hearest—  
Either learn to love like me,  
Or teach me to charm like thee.

---

## TO STELLA.

I LOOKED on a fountain  
Which laughed up all brightly,  
And flushed in the soft wind  
That rippled it lightly ;  
And it smiled in the sunshine  
In dimples of gold,  
But beneath—its dark waters  
Lay sullen and cold.

I look on thy fair face  
When smiles on it hover,  
And a warm lustre lights up  
Eyes, cheeks, lips, all over ;  
But, ah ! like the fountain,  
Amid this bright glow,  
The hard heart, untouched, is  
As cold as the snow.

## BRIDAL-CAKE DREAM.

## PREFACE.

MISS SHAW was wed on Hogmanay,  
And to Bankier were brought away  
Some bits of cake to dream upon,  
Of which I, J. B. C., got one.  
Before I went to bed, with care  
I placed it, as instructed, there,  
Under the pillows buried deep,  
Then tumbled in and fell asleep.

## THE DREAM.

'Twas summer eve—the moon was up  
In the cloudless vault of blue,  
And every flower had filled its cup  
With the soft and silvery dew ;  
All clear and balmy was the air  
And I was in a garden fair,  
Decked out in summer's gayest glory ;  
So fair a place I well can deem  
Was never seen—even in a dream,  
Nor read of in a fairy story.  
I saw a light and gay alcove  
With honeysuckle round it curled,  
And there I sat, with her I love,  
The dearest girl in all the world.

I spoke of the gentle star of eve  
With its brethren of the skies,  
But the only stars I thought of then  
Were her beautiful violet eyes.  
Little cared I for the lustrous sky  
With its myriad fires so fair,  
When I looked into her angel face,  
For all my heaven lay *there*.

Of all the flowers in that garden close  
But one had power to please,  
Neither lady lily nor queenly rose,  
But the quiet heartsease ;  
And she alone, of all the world,  
Could place it in my breast,  
That my cares and doubts might flee away  
And my bosom be at rest.

Flame for a time may hide and smoulder,  
And love may show no sign ;  
But it must out—so growing bolder  
I took her little hands in mine ;  
Oh! how it thrilled, that gentle touch—  
With accents low and trembling much,  
My tale of love I told her.

“ My thoughts towards thine image move  
A strong and fervid tide of love,

Resistless as a mighty river,  
Yesterday—to-day—for ever.  
Cares and sorrows cannot harm me,  
Love, if thy soft voice but charm me.  
Ah ! to hear my prayer incline—  
Restore not this stolen heart of mine ;  
Keep it still, but give me thine."

Before her answer could be spoken,  
The dream had fled—the spell was broken.  
How long, alas ! must I now wait  
Before her lips must seal my fate ?

---

### THE DEAD HOPE.

BE still ! be still ! though thou shouldst break,  
Thou fond and foolish heart of mine ;  
Ache if thou must—but see thou make  
Never a sign.

Short space ago, strong-winged and rich  
In fairies, came a smiling Hope,  
Pinioned to reach the highest pitch  
Of heaven's cope.

But in one hour its wings were torn,  
One hour its rainbow tints had fled ;  
At night full flushed with life, at morn  
      'Twas cold and dead.

---

*MAGGIE, DARLING.*

COULD the heart, when hope has perished,  
      Bid remembrance also vanish ;  
Could love's golden dreams, long cherished,  
      Pass away with what they banish ;  
Then might this vexed heart, forgetting  
      All the mastery of love's spell,  
Sigh out gently, scarce regretting,  
      Maggie, darling ! fare thee well !

But when hope is doomed to languish,  
      Memory takes a tyrant's power,  
And imparts a double anguish  
      To our sorrow's saddest hour.  
Be these trembling lips the token  
      Of a pang no words can tell,  
As I murmur now, heart broken,  
      Maggie, darling ! fare thee well !

Fare thee well! our paths may sever,  
But my heart must dwell with thee ;  
'Twould be now a vain endeavour  
Did I call it back to me ;  
'Tis not mine—nor would it hearken ;  
Since this sorrow o'er me fell,  
Day by day the shadows darken—  
Maggie, darling! fare thee well!

---

*BRIGHT EYES.*

IN the solemn depths of the still night skies,  
The stars—those trembling angel-eyes—  
In silence and splendour  
Glimmer aloft,  
Serenely and tender,  
With glow so soft.  
But brighter and dearer,  
Serenely and clearer,  
'Tho' only of mortal birth,  
Are thy beautiful eyes—  
'Thy love-lit eyes—  
Those dearer stars of earth.

## BRIDAL SONG.

YES ! deck her out in her bridal robes,  
Twine a wreath in her raven hair,  
And let her waist with a zone be braced  
Of emeralds rich and rare ;  
Let the diamond gleam on her snowy brow,  
Though her eyes the gems eclipse,  
And rubies deck her swanlike neck—  
They are pale beside her lips.

---

## SAD THOUGHTS.

THE harvest-time is past, and the ripe sheaves  
Are in the barnyard, bound with thatch and rope,  
And now the green is passing from the leaves  
Like the illusion from a dying hope.  
No more the swallows twitter in the eaves,  
Or pierce with giddy flight the skies' blue cope ;  
And the winds sigh about as broken-hearted,  
Lamenting summer's beauty, all departed !

Yet still the earth is glorious, and the heaven  
Lovely beyond all other lovelinesses ;  
And to the sad and silent stars is given  
A sympathetic effluence, that impresses

The weary heart—all sorrow-scorched and riven,  
Like the remembrance of love's first caresses,  
Which haunt the soul's most secret caves for years,  
And fill the heavy eyes with unsought tears.

Friends fail and hopes are shattered, and the eyes  
That once made joy and sunshine in our heart  
Forget their wonted welcome-glance, and ties  
Once deemed indissoluble burst and part ;  
But these are matters for no great surprise,  
'Tis but the oft-played trick of the world's art ;  
So let these vain regrets seek the profound  
Abyss of old Oblivion. Look around.

This world of ours, methinks, is like a cat :  
So with it—that is—stroke her *with* the hair,  
Then things go all serenely and quite pat,  
Pussy pur-purs and holds her back quite fair—  
The world proclaims you “charming,” and all that ;  
But stroke her up the other way, and dare  
Think for yourself, then comes the rub, Miss Tab gets  
    brisker,  
Out come the talons and up curls the whisker.





## BIRTHDAY FANCY.

TO ISABELLA CLARK.

LONELY sitting—lonely sitting—  
Though 'tis long since midnight tolled,  
In before me there came flitting  
Dreams and fancies manifold.  
Thoughts upon the present tending,  
In their whirling mixed and blending  
With fond memories—sunny memories  
Of the dear, done days of old ;  
And upon me comes a chiming  
Fit of strange fantastic rhyming,  
Whims of fancies grand and gay,  
And I weave me  
Ere they leave  
One slight, fragile wreath of rhyme,  
Welcoming the happy time  
That brings round thy natal day.

Round, and still round, in ceaseless course advancing,  
The seasons circle, with unwearied wing,  
Gay summer into golden autumn glancing,  
And weary winter melting into spring.

Yes ! spring hath wakened earth anew,  
Bringing birthdays twenty-two ;  
And your sky is still of blue—  
Not a cloud at twenty-two—  
With less of grief or sorrow, few  
Ever number twenty-two.  
So give thanks where thanks are due,  
That you're safe at twenty-two.  
Years all bright in golden hue,  
Onward stretch from twenty-two.  
Now I place before your view,  
Some remarks for twenty-two :  
Be not haughty lest you rue,  
When you're long past twenty-two.  
Think of those at Garngrew—  
They were once but twenty-two ;  
So you see how people do,  
Who lose time at twenty-two.  
Folk must drink just as they brew—  
Take the hint at twenty-two.

May the year that's a comer  
Be one long glad summer

Laden with blessings for thee and for thine;  
Good temper and health,  
Believe me, is wealth  
That surpasses the treasures of earth's richest mine.

All good luck attend thee,  
Good wishes I send thee,  
May they have the good fortune to please—

They are these :

May your gowns always fit,  
May your gloves never split,  
May your tea always draw,  
May your will be a law,  
May your foot never trip,  
May your garters ne'er slip,  
May you ne'er take the huff,  
May you never talk "buff,"  
May your chimney ne'er smoke,  
May you ne'er want your joke,  
May corns spare your toes,  
May no frost bite your nose,  
May your tooth ache no more,  
May sweethearts be galore,  
May you never catch cold,  
May your heart ne'er grow old,  
May your bread ne'er be burned,  
May your milk ne'er be turned,  
And whatever comes about,  
May we never fall out.

I'll just add one more,  
To make out the score,  
And close this long spell  
With just one remark—  
May you long be a belle,  
But not long Bell Clark !

---

*BIRTHDAY FANCY.*

TO MISS CLARK.

MINGLING soft memories of years fled for aye  
And golden hopes of happy ones in store,  
Returning summer sends its first-born, May,  
Young and gay, flushed with sunshine, to out-pour  
Choice blessings, and to hail thee twenty-four ;  
Like milestones meeting the wayfarer's sight,  
And these returning birthdays evermore  
Reminding us of time's unpausing flight,  
Keeping for ever on, alike in gloom or light.

And meet it is that Summer's darling should  
Thus bring around thy birthday—thou art now  
In the first flush of youthful womanhood ;  
The May-time of thy life—upon thy brow

Time's wasting finger hath not pressed yet—thou  
Hast never known the deeper griefs which vary  
The natural current of the soul, and bow  
The loftiest hopes to dust. May each kind fairy  
Shield thee from this sad knowledge all the life-long May.

It is not wholly fable  
What these olden legends tell  
Of words which, understood aright,  
Were gifted with the hidden might  
Of magic charm and spell.  
Yes; there are names, themselves most dear,  
Yet dearer from associations,  
Which, when they fall upon the ear  
Evoke thoughts, airy forms as clear  
As olden wizard's incantations.  
There are dreams which will fly not,  
There are hopes which will die not,  
There are golden memories which will never pass away;  
There are names which, when spoken,  
Leave an impress and a token  
On the heart which must be broken  
Ere their music and their magic can decay.

Mary! Mary!

I but name the word,  
As 'twere the waving of a fairy  
Wand—the dwellers in the past are stirred,

And, like shadows to the dreaming  
Fancy, they come round me streaming,  
With a rustling and a flutter,  
And sad, silent eyes, which utter  
More than tongue can say in its wildest vagaries.  
Moving in an atmosphere  
Of heart memories, calm and clear,  
Come the phantoms of the Maries.

The Virgin-mother and the Magdalene,  
With her who sought that her two sons should sit,  
One on each hand, and the great Lord between;  
And she who found that loveliness and wit  
Bring but disaster—Scotland's beauteous queen,  
Murdered to please a vixen's jealous fit;  
And Mary Chaworth—cause of Byron's sighs—  
With many more, glide in before my eyes.

Away! away! I linger not with them;  
My soul is with the present and with thee;  
And thy beloved name, like a rich gem,  
I would set round with gentlest poesy.  
And if it were not that the days are gone  
When fairies walked the earth or peopled air,  
I'd call each airy tribe from its own zone  
To tend and guard thee with incessant care.

If they dwelt but with us  
I would summon them thus:

## INCANTATION SONG.

Dwellers in the viewless blast,  
Over you the spell is cast,  
Ye who shun the light of day  
Loving more night's solemn ray,  
Villa, duende, elf, and fay,  
By the name which none may utter,  
By the awful spell I mutter,  
Hasten while you hasten may.

From the dim land of dreams—  
From the palace of sleep—  
From the woods and the streams—  
From the coves of the deep—  
From the sloping sunbeams  
Where your revels ye keep,  
In whose bath of hot gleams  
Your fine essence ye steep—  
From the clouds of the skies—  
From the mists of the earth,  
Whence the death-vapours rise,  
And disease hath its birth—  
From the marsh—from the fen—  
From the dwellings of men—

I have called on you once, and I call you again.

Sprites of earth, sprites of air—

Sprites of water and fire—

Ye who love the night's gloom—ye who love the day's  
glare—

Come with a fleetness outspeeding desire,

Each and all, while you may,

Come away.

To each separate gentle fairy

Thus I give strict charge and order

To attend this darling Mary,

Evermore to help and guard her.

Elves who in the cups of flowers

Waste the scented summer hours,

Leave forsaken bud and bloom,

And in her features find a home ;

Ye who love the lily's cup,

To her forehead clamber up,

Or with circled wreathings deck

The whiteness of her shapely neck ;

Ye who lurk in the deep bosom

Of the well-veiled red-rose blossom,

On her ruddy lips may seek

A dwelling-place, and in her cheek

When roses red and white are blending,

Each for victory contending

In a contest never ending.



Gentler fairy elves who lie  
In the odorous secrecy  
Of the blue-veined violet's eye,  
In her perfumed breath from hence  
Ever be your residence.

Gnomes who follow Vulcan's trade  
In the mountain's deep recesses,  
People henceforth every braid  
Of her waving nut-brown tresses ;  
Forging every ringlet rare  
Into fetters to ensnare,  
And to keep that none deliver  
Her lovers' hearts enchained for ever.

Subtler spirits of the fire,  
Seek her eyes and then enkindle  
The lustrous light of love's desire,  
Nor let grow faint and dwindle  
With the chilling touch of sorrow,  
But let every new to-morrow  
Light those orbs up with a finer  
Lustre, rarer and diviner.  
Adieu ! fond fancies of the olden days ;  
Earth would be most melancholy  
Without some touch of faith and folly.

These are the spirits that make childhood's time so  
gay.

If prayers have power—if fondest wishes bring  
Accomplishment of their desire, thy gentle head  
Shall be encircled with a happy ring  
Of the most wished-for blessings earth has bred.  
All gentlest thoughts shall ever light on thee,  
All golden fancies of extremest scope,  
And joys more dear than love—if such there be—  
And softest memory and sunniest hope.

May smiles ripple o'er  
Your face, as of yore—  
Plenty and yet more plenty  
Multiplied by four and twenty.

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JANUARY 1, 1872.

RABELAIS—SMITH LOQUITUR.

ON the threshold of the year,  
Look before and after :  
Weigh the woe that drew the tear—  
The joy that woke the laughter.  
From the altered standpoint view,  
Intermingling thorough,  
Tears and smiles transformed anew,  
Transposing joy and sorrow ;

Borrowing each the other's hue—  
Which was joy? which sorrow?

On the threshold of the year,  
Look before and after :  
Weigh the woe will draw the tear—  
The joy will wake the laughter.  
Credit neither sunny hope,  
Nor despondent warning,  
In the life-kaleidoscope  
Who'll predict—ere turning—  
How the prisms will shift and slope,  
Or their tints be burning.

On the threshold of the year,  
Ponder well the present :  
Griefs are no enduring gear,  
Joys are evanescent ;  
Flood is not more sure than ebb,  
Till the skies be cloven—  
Woof and warp to form the web  
Must be interwoven,  
Whether shroud into the web,  
Or bridal-robe, be woven.

Day and night make up the year—  
Joy and grief its hist'ry ;  
Its woof a smile, its warp a tear—  
Their web life's open myst'ry.

Take that world the world presents ;  
Neither hell nor heaven—  
Not all Carnivals nor Lents :  
Smooth now—now uneven—  
Trust the chapter of events :  
Act as to thee given.

---

## RETHE.

THE summer snow lay thick upon the hedges,  
Breathing the hawthorn's essence out in musk ;  
The timid ash-bud, from its cloven edges,  
Shot out an emerald fringe round each grey husk ;  
The chestnut trees were brave with creamy cones ;  
The light-green beechfrond foiled the last year's brown ;  
And from the braeface, ranged in golden zones,  
The blossomed broom upon the firth looked down,  
And Lily, with clasped hands and quick-drawn breath,  
Paced up and down the garden-paths of Rethe.

The merle piped bravely from the birchen spray,  
The blackbird carolled from the laurel bush,  
The bee boomed past on its unswerving way,  
And from the neighbouring glen, in ceaseless gush,

The hidden burn sent up its happy din ;  
 The swallows twittered round the ivied eaves,  
 The wind of dawn across the firth came in,  
 And stirred the slumbers of the dreaming leaves—  
 And tossed the hair and blended with the breath  
 Of Lily, in the garden-paths of Rethe.

The freshness of the dawn and of the spring  
 Clothed with a dewy veil the earth and sky ;  
 And tender dreams of hope were whispering  
 In Lily's heart, in happy sympathy ;  
 And every now and then her steps were drawn  
 To a green mound that stood near, round and bold,  
 Whence she could see, under the sky of dawn,  
 The broad bright firth, in belts of blue and gold,  
 And wishful thoughts in wishful words found breath,  
 And Lily murmured on the mound of Rethe :

“ Blow out, O wind, from the welcome west !  
 O'er loch, and fell, and heather—  
 Blow out, O wind, my heart loves best,  
 And bring its summer weather.  
 Fill out his sails who loves me best—  
 Who brings my summer weather ;  
 Come, welcome wind, from the happy west—  
 You and my love, together !

“ Blow out, O wind, from the golden east !  
The ship that bears my lover ;  
Its voyage must now have well-nigh ceased—  
O bring him quickly over !  
My heart went with him, west or east,  
The weary world all over ;  
His faith has never failed nor ceased,  
Though far and wide a rover.

“ O welcome wind, blow fair and free—  
From what point of the heaven  
I know not—care not—so he be  
In safety homeward driven—  
I know not—care not—east or west,  
Or north or south, if given  
The favouring wind that fits him best,  
From any point of heaven.”

And not long after, in the even-tide,  
Sweet Lily paced the garden-paths of Rethe,  
And listened, breathless, while he, by her side,  
Told of the shipwreck, and the imminent death,  
In the stern struggle with the wind and wave—  
And the more terrible clutch of famine's grip,  
Which held a lurid welcome o'er the grave—  
And last, the rescue by the homebound ship—  
And Lily fancied that the chill of death  
Shot, with the gloaming, through the woods of Rethe.

## LONG AGO.

IN youth's happy El Dorado,  
In the golden long ago,  
Ere grief's gloom, or sorrow's shadow,  
Darkling, dimmed life's sunny flow;  
In hope's land of light and lustre,  
Where each flower o'erhangs a cluster  
Of the purple grapes of love;  
In the land where, self-enchanted,  
Dreams take breath, and, beauty-haunted,  
We can neither look nor move  
Without seeing through the far light,  
Flashed from fancy's fevered glow,  
Fairer shapes than sun or starlight  
Gives our older eyes to know:—  
In this happy El Dorado,  
In this land without a shadow,  
Once we lived, ah! long ago,  
In the far-off, misty, olden,  
Golden, misty long ago.

If at times the fair ideal  
Of the golden long ago  
Flits before the hymeneal  
Face, whose smile, as seasons flow,

Grows more womanly and tender,  
Soon the nympholeptic splendour

Fades, as fades the morning dawn,  
And the rays of truth enshrine *her*  
In a lustre far diviner

Than the idol youth had drawn.  
Youthful eyes grow dim and dimmer,  
But, lit up with subtler glow,  
Brighter *hers* gleam forth and shimmer,  
With a light we trust and know.

So the present's loving real,  
Dims and blurs the fair ideal  
That we dreamt of long ago,  
In the far-off, misty, olden,  
Golden, misty long ago.

If at times a brief regretting  
Of the golden long ago  
Comes upon us, weak, forgetting  
Life's more calmly ordered flow;  
Then, anon, the dulled ear catches  
Noise of pattering feet, and snatches  
Of our children's careless play.  
Forthwith all old dreams we banish—  
Forthwith all despondings vanish—  
Life is blest to us to-day.  
Childish lispings and caressings  
Kindle fresh the heart's warm glow,



Showing to our eyes our blessings—

We are happier than we know ;

So dissolves our weak forgetting,

So our souls thrill, none regretting

How we lived once, long ago,

In the far-off, misty, olden,

Golden, misty long ago.

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## SKADI'S CHOICE.

FROM THE EDDAS.

THOUGH faint and vigour-wasted from the loss  
Of Idun's golden apples, high and broad  
The Æsir piled the circling fence of flame  
Round Asgard's bulwarks : and Thiassi's wings  
Were weary with the long, now flagging flight  
From furthest Jötunheim : and searing tongues  
Up from the fire-belt leapt, and sour, grey smoke  
Soaked through his plumage, and he fell—he fell.  
The storm of flame out-tempested the rage  
Of him, the stormiest of the Jötunkind.  
So burnt Thiassi, on the roaring pile  
That Thor and Tyr had heaped round high Asgard.

Far off, amid the rocks of Jötunheim,  
Sat Skadi, carding chilly fleece of rime,  
When on some wandering Vanirs' voices came  
The tidings of the Jötun's fiery end.  
Thiassi's daughter rose and took her arms—  
Arrows of sleet, and icy-pointed spear,  
And rime-fringed shield, and sword of frozen fire—  
And bent her way toward the Æsirland;  
Across the misty spume of many seas—  
Through Svartheim's under-depths—through Nōatun—  
And through the scented hollows of Alfheim,  
To holy Hlidskjalf, where the Asa sat—  
Odin himself—the dweller in Gladsheim.

In full Valhalla—all the Æsir round—  
She made demand of vengeance; made demand  
That one of all the many heroes there  
Should battle with her for her father's death.  
Then Bragi smiled and sung, "Fair maid and tall,  
That way will surely end in bale of one,  
Mayhap of both. Were it not better far  
That one of this our noble Æsir band  
Should wed thyself, and make a good return  
Of living husband for a father dead?  
That were revenge enough, methinks. Say now."  
She passed an eye-glance round the circling troop.  
The flaming beard and mighty limbs of Thor;  
Tyr's stately strength and Hoenir's lithesome make,

Blind Hodur, Hermod, Bragi, and Vidár—  
None tempted her, until her swift regard  
Fell upon Baldur, flashing like a gem.

The radiance of the sun was on his brow,  
And on his cheeks and in his heavenly eyes,  
And streaming from his tresses' amber lengths ;  
And this she settled in her heart should be  
Her husband, and no other.

It was judged,  
By the Val father Odin's will, that all  
Should straight betake themselves behind the screen  
Of the broad-woven curtain that ran round  
The wall of Baldur's hall in Breidablik ;  
And that beneath the tapestry's lower edge  
The feet alone of each should be in view,  
And by the feet should Skadi choose her man.

So done. The Jötuness passed on and on,  
Once and again, along the curtain's length—  
And yet again ; and every time her eye  
Fell on two feet, most wondrous beautiful,  
Most delicately shaped ; and every time  
Her heart said to her, "Surely this is he ;  
Surely the bright-browed Baldur stands above."

And these she chose : and down the curtain fell :  
And the wide hall rang to its lofty roof

With unextinguishable laugh and shout ;  
For on these feet stood gusty, bluff Niord,  
The hearty, old, and blustering, boisterous Van.

Small love for laughing lay in Skadi's heart :  
But she was held firm in the bond of choice,  
And might nowise gainsay the issue. So  
They wed, and bickered evermore. What home  
Should hold them bred a never-done debate.  
'Twas settled in some sort, that they should live  
Three days in Nōatun, and in Thrymheim  
Thrice three : so much to Skadi's wish  
Niord bent, grumble-granting.

On a time,  
Bound back to Nōatun, Niord broke out :  
    " This abode of noise—Thrymheim—  
        Wearies me. I cannot tell  
How I hate these nine days' time  
        Wasted 'mid the foxes' yell.  
For the Bragarfull—a bowl  
        Of half-melted rime ;  
For the mead-fired lay—a howl  
        Of wolves in the dreary gloaming-time."

And Skadi, bitter-hearted, made reply :

    " Wa ! the wearisome wash of the waves  
        Tossing across the sand—  
Wa ! the sea-gulls' scream from the caves  
        By Nōatun's strand !

Wa ! the wing-mad Vanir race—  
Noon and night it grieves me !  
Through the dreary three days' space  
Slumber ever leaves me."

No more she spake, but suddenly betook  
Her way still northward—northward—till she came  
Far past the utter bounds of Jötunheim,  
Beyond the scent of Lyngvi's broomy isle,  
On to the frosty plain of endless snow  
Where lowed Audhumla, when time was not yet ;  
And there she lived alone, from that day forth,  
A skater-huntress. And Niord—old Niord—  
He of the delicate foot and gusty breath—  
Kept aye to wind-swept, wave-washed Nōatun.

And, as the Saga adds, Beware—beware !  
Not well-shaped foot alone, nor well-shaped form,  
Nor charm of winsome face regard in man,  
Or woman either—think on SKADI'S CHOICE.

## A CUMBERLAND LEGEND.

UNDER the beeches of Earlswood Chase  
The maiden steals bashfully on in the twilight :  
Her eyes, as she nears to the old trysting-place,  
Are half-veiled in the dew of a tender yet shy light ;  
And the red flush of evening is bright in her face,  
And her dark hair is stirred by the faint breeze of  
    gloaming,  
While the rapturous welcome of love waits her coming,  
    Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase.

Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase  
Pace to and fro the fair maid and her lover :  
And each glance is endowed with an undying grace,  
And each vow is still new, though told over and over ;  
And the fond faith of youth and of love cannot trace  
The shade of a dark cloud in earth or in heaven !  
While the troth-piece is broken—the troth-word is given  
    Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase.

Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase  
The maid and her lover have met and have parted ;  
When out from the gloom where the boughs interlace,  
The undreamed-of watcher has stealthily started,

With despair and revenge in each line of his face—  
Where the sweat-furrowed brow and the chest's stifled  
    breathing,  
Betoken the strife in that heart that is seething  
    Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase.

Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase  
The lover hies home ; in his happy love-dreaming  
Enrapt and absorbed ; and knows naught of the  
    pace  
Of the rival pursuer, whose dagger is gleaming  
With a murderous resolve in the chequered moon  
    rays.  
One swift blow, one short shriek, and the slayer is  
    flying  
From the blood-dabbled nook where his brother is  
    lying  
    Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase.

Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase  
Wearily, wearily, morrow on morrow  
Glides away and is gone, without hope to efface  
The blight that bows down the pale maid of Carlora  
Like a storm-broken lily her beauty and grace  
Lie low in the dust of a hopeless repining  
For him o'er whose grave weeds and wild flowers are  
    twining,  
    Under the beeches of Earlswood Chase.

Far from the beeches of Earlswood Chase  
 Blood-haunted, unresting, the mad brother-slayer,  
 With the curse-brand of Cain on his brow and his face,  
 Wanders far 'neath strange skies, followed aye by the  
                 glare

Of those eyes that met his in the ghostly moon rays,  
 Many a day now long gone!—and will follow for ever,  
 Till remorse calls on death by some palm-shaded river,  
                 Far from the beeches of Earlswood Chase.

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## THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THINGS.

THERE are two sides to every picture,  
       There are two ways to tell every tale,  
 AND 'tis weak to give in to misfortune,  
       Though often our efforts may fail.  
 SHALL we not love the smiling of April,  
       Because of the tear-drops it brings?  
 OH, this earth would be Paradise nearly,  
       If we'd look at the bright side of things.

The web of our life is inwoven  
       With colours—some dark and some gay;  
 LET us sleep through the night of our sorrow,  
       And awaken when joy brings the day.



Highest up on the hill 'tis the bleakest,  
 And care haunts the dwelling of kings,  
 But our lot—if it's lowly—is sheltered ;  
 Let us look at the bright side of things.

Good goes through the world masquerading,  
 We know it not in its disguise,  
 What we take for a blank in our folly,  
 May turn out, in time, the chief prize.  
 Then let Hope be our guide and consoler ;  
 'Tis in darkness the nightingale sings ;  
 Christmas comes in the dead of the winter—  
 Let us look at the bright side of things.

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F A N C Y.

“ We look before and after,  
 And pine for what is not.”

—SHELLEY'S *Ode to the Skylark*.

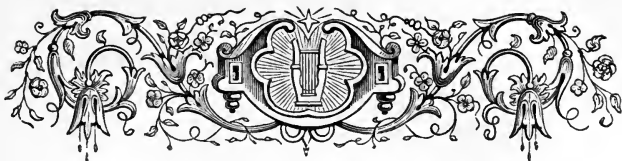
WHEN the wheat was as high as my daughter's head,  
 Toddlings by me—three years old—  
 I looked to the future before us, and said,  
 “ When a few short months shall have onward rolled,  
 The wheat will be tall, and its green have sped,  
 Through shade and tint to the harvest gold.”

From the present we look to the future's hours.  
In spring we sigh for the summer's flowers—  
For the summer's flowers and the autumn's fruit;  
Only the voice of To-day is mute.

When the wheat was as high as my own bowed head,  
My daughter lay beneath the mould.  
I looked on the past behind me, and said,  
“The wind of the autumn evening is cold—  
Oh for the days ere the poppies were red,  
Before the fronds of the fern were unrolled.”

From the present we turn to past's fled hours—  
From the harvest's wealth, and the year's late  
flowers—  
From the year's late flowers and the harvest's fruit;  
Only the voice of To-day is mute.





## WHAT ODIN'S EYE BOUGHT.

FOURTH DAY—ONSDAG.

“ Not unto any—not to Odin even—  
Can come the Nornir's godliest gift—To KNOW—  
Without its fated price, inevitable,  
Inexorable, unvicarious—  
The price of pain and sacrifice—the loss,  
Self-suffered, self-inflicted, of some good,  
Great—but not greatest—whence the Greatest comes ;  
—So Ygg Alfader found at Mimir's Well.”

FROM the Valhalla—from Gladsheim he passed—  
And up the steeps of Asgard to Hlidskjalf—  
The father Asa : and there throned himself.  
O'er Æsirheim, and o'er Manheim he looked,  
And through the depths of Elfland and Svartheim,  
Piercing the distance with discerning eyes ;  
Till in grey Jötunheim he saw the growth  
Of wrong or horrors, to be wrestled with,  
And thrown, and beaten down, and that at once—  
The waxing Jörmungand—the Fenriswolf—  
And Hela, with the tint and touch of death.

Down Asgard's steps, through Asgard's golden gate,  
Foot-hot he pressed him, on and ever on :  
Weariless through the peopled land he passed,  
Scattering about him, as he went, among  
The human mortals, words and works that woke  
The mystery of fire-craft, with the forge  
And smitten stithy ; and the lore that lures  
The seed from forth the furrow once again,  
Tenfold, and twenty, and an hundred fold.

So he went on and on ; and now the blue  
That bends above, made downward slope, and met  
The blue of waters that swelled up to it.  
Here one end of the tremulous bridge—Bifröst—  
Finished its coloured curve. Here Mimir sat.  
Here crisped the wavelets of the wondrous well.  
The grey, grim guardian sat, uncaring all  
Who came or went—who wished or who disdained—  
And recked of naught, no time, but this—His price.  
To him the Asa stoutly strided up,  
And stoutly sought his draught.

“ No small request  
Is this that thou requirest, Asa Ygg :  
There is great virtue in this well of mine,  
But few have wit of that : and since *thou* hast,  
It marks, besides, that thou hast worth, to boot.  
Pay me my price, and thereon drink thy fill.”

"It cannot be a churl's bode that buys  
The treasure, bitter-sweet, of Wisdom's well,"  
Quoth Odin to himself; then out aloud—  
"I, Asa Odin, willingly will give  
In purchase my right hand."

"Nay, Asa, nay, .

Your bode fails of my price. But your right eye  
Will buy the draught. 'Tis meet the dearest price  
Go for the dearest treasure. Like for like."

With a great sorrow Odin heard the word ;  
Yet, wotting that it *must* be so, he plucked  
From its deep socket the blue ball of sight,  
And flung it on the ground at Mimir's feet.  
Of mighty breadth of brim, and deep, the horn  
That, full of wondrous water, Mimir gave  
To Asgard's lord, and, through the shaggy fall  
That fringed his lip, it drained, until  
The uttermost drop had passed the Asa's throat.

And nowise then he mourned the lacking orb ;  
For all, and more, of gladsome radiancy  
That ever, in the many backward years,  
Had passed through that right eye, now in one blaze  
Flamed like a sudden-kindled beacon fire,  
And flooded heart and brain with light and warmth.

The half of knowledge is the wish to know,

And all the rest will follow. This was his.  
He saw that wisdom of the Midgard world  
(Of Æsir, men, and elves, and Jotunkind),  
Eye-won from forth the wavering slope, Hlidskjalf,  
Or gathered from the Ravens twain at eve,  
Was not enough to fit the Asa-lord  
With full sufficiency to meet the needs  
Of his allfatherhood. So on he fared—  
North, in the face of frory winds, still on,  
And ceased not, till earth, at its utmost verge,  
Shot out a frozen peak, and then—was not.

On this did Asa Odin stretch him out,  
And looked, and better looked, on Nothingness ;  
For three days' space his one eye viewed in vain  
The emptiness of Neflheim's nebulous void—  
Not seeing till use brought the wont to see—  
Three days and nights—and then the mighty trunk  
Of Yggdrasil, the Earth-ash, at whose root  
Gnawed evermore the envious snake, Nidhogg,  
Grew to his growing sight, from dark to dim,  
From dim to clear : and then his eye could pierce  
To where the cold, wan, homeless spectres stalked  
Along the shore of corpses in Nastrond.  
His perfect gaze into the gulf of gulfs,  
Where roared and boiled the caldron, Hvergelmir,  
Whose breath gave up a mist of nameless ills,  
Reached last of all—even to Muspellheim—

And further was no vision given to Ygg.  
Through all the time—all the nine nights and days—  
Odin applied himself to Runes, and grew  
Each day more wise, and every day more sad ;  
For sadness follows wisdom, shadow-like.

Uprose he and departed : strong and wise  
If sad ; and went his way to Jötunheim,  
To Loki's homestead. Angerbodi's brood  
Met Odin's mastery then. The Jörmungand  
He clutched at mightily, and tossed afar  
Into the outer sea—its sudden growth  
Apace brought tail to mouth ; and thus was coiled  
The endless circle of the Midgard Worm :  
Then Hela—pallid, pulseless, queenly-faced—  
With eyes full of unutterable chill—  
Was portioned, and departed to her realm  
And rulership of death—Helheim :  
And the wolf Fenrir for the time was tamed,  
And followed Father Odin to Valhall :  
And so the Three Ills of the Giantland  
Owned Ygg's supremacy till Ragnarok.

For wisdom Odin sacrificed his eye :  
Done nobly ! nathless he must meet the Wolf,  
When the gods' twilight comes at Vegrid-fight.

## MÆROR CORDIS.

ACHING heart, what wouldst thou more now?

Little car'st thou what's in store now;

She is dead, and all is o'er now,

Save the deathless memory.

As the current of the river

Back again returneth never,

So no more—no more for ever—

Will my peace return to me.

From what fountain shall I borrow

A forgetfulness of sorrow?

Shall there ever dawn a morrow

As the morrows dawned of old?

Loves as dear no one remembers,

Fires as fierce are now but embers,

Julys chill into Decembers,

Lava-floods grow hard and cold.

But this heart must cease its panting,

And these dreams must cease me haunting,

Ere the sense of what is wanting

In forgetfulness be lost.

There's a presence which will fly not,

There's a memory which will die not,

All Time's magic can supply not

An exorcism of this ghost.



Listless now, and all unnoting  
O'er the dead past, dreaming, doting,  
Days on days run by me, floating  
    Helmless on Time's weary stream ;  
Numbed as souls in lotus-trances,  
Circled round with ghostly fancies,  
Seeing but in side-long glances  
    The workday world beyond this dream.

She is dead !—three words record it,  
But within these words is hoarded  
A world of sorrow—all unsordid—  
    And within that world I live.  
Evermore, from dawn to even,  
Rests a shadow o'er my heaven ;  
Since *her* sunlight is not given,  
    What light now hath earth to give?

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## IN MEMORIAM.

JANE, BATHIA, AND MARGARET STEEDMAN,  
DROWNED IN LOCHLEVEN, 22D JANUARY 1870.

DARK memories of the captive and betrayed  
Haunt thy sad waters, fair and cruel lake,  
Girdling the prison-keep of old—whence eyes,  
Wearied with hope deferred, have watched thy waves

Glinting their cold, clear, ripples in the sun,  
To mock the captive with their cruel show  
Of wind-stirred freedom; or, bound up in frost,  
Offering a way his footsteps might not tread.

But, in the sorrow of to-day, we think  
Little of all the far-off, olden woes  
The lake has looked on. Lured by Love's  
Impulsive frenzy, sister after sister—  
One, and another, and another still,  
Drawn, by the bitter cry of present death,  
Into the yawning jaws of death! the ice  
Tempting affection's step into its grasp,  
Then tossing it, remorseless, to the chill  
And pitiless embrace of the cold wave.  
Woe's me! lovely in life, and in their death  
Still undivided. Who can dare to trace  
The agony of that lost sacrifice,  
When Love, stronger than Death, essayed to save,  
Alas, how vainly! when the merciless wave  
Clutched triple tribute, reckless of the home  
So sadly desolated? Sympathy  
May breathe consoling tones; but there is "that  
Within that passeth show" when sorrow falls  
With such a lethal shadow on the hearth.

"What sorrow is there like to ours?" well may  
The parents murmur, in the bitterness

Of heart, and hope eclipsed. What shall we say?  
 What *can* we say? but wait, with folded hands,  
 The coming of the Comforter, whose wings,  
 Even now, although invisible to us,  
 Fan the far-spreading ether—hitherbound,  
 And freighted with the anodyne of Time.

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## A FANCY.

“Where art thou, beloved To-morrow?  
 When young and old, and strong and weak,  
 Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,  
 Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,—  
 In thy place—ah! well-a-day!  
 We find the thing we fled—To-day.”

—SHELLEY.

WEARY, weary of the sunlight,  
 Weary of the stars;  
 Weary of life's sickening circle,  
 Jealousies and jars;  
 Weary of the hollow-hearted  
 Mockery of fools,  
 Strait-waistcoated in worldly shams—  
 Pedants of worldly schools;

To my heart I whisper, lowly,  
    'Mid the dreary glooms,  
Better things will come To-morrow—  
    But TO-MORROW never comes.  
The world wheels on its ceaseless way,  
And we know nothing but TO-DAY.

Promised aid of purchased friendship,  
    Hitherto delayed ;  
Proffered sympathy in action,  
    And not simply said ;  
Charity that's not puffed up,  
    Not Peter's, but St Paul's ;  
Advice not merely meant to sting  
    And blister where it falls,  
But with solace and a blessing  
    Wheresoe'er it blooms :  
*These*, I trow, will come To-morrow—  
    But TO-MORROW never comes.  
The world wheels on, through grave and gay,  
And we know nothing but TO-DAY.

Better health and happier spirits,  
    Heart to face the fate ;  
Former aims and former errors  
    Lapsed, and out of date ;  
Visions of the silver lining  
    Of the sable cloud ;

New comfort of a self-content,  
Strong, if unavowed ;  
Freshened hope, that faint, but fairly  
In the distance looms :  
*These* will surely come To-morrow—  
But TO-MORROW never comes.  
Vain to hasten or delay ;  
We know nothing but TO-DAY.

Slander's fang shall lose its venom,  
At the charmer's charm ;  
Self-conceit confess its measure,  
Toadyism its harm ;  
Purblind bigots, past their noses  
See a shadowy world ;  
False pretence's flaunting banner  
Shall be dipped and furled ;  
The cant "I am the holier" banished  
To the Capulets' tombs :  
All shall come to pass To-morrow—  
But TO-MORROW never comes.  
The world can vary as it may ;  
We know nothing but To-day.

## NELLY.

LITTLE NELLY—chattering Nelly—  
With youth's freshest tones,  
Musical as glancing streamlet  
O'er the glancing stones ;  
Make the spring-time promise dearer  
With the cheery noise,  
Bring the promised spring-time nearer  
With your happy voice.

Little Nelly—winsome Nelly—  
My pet girl of girls ;  
Darling Nelly ! in the sunshine  
Toss your sunny curls ;  
Make the summer sunshine brighter  
With your laughing eyes,  
Make the summer sunshine lighter  
With their glad surprise.

Little Nelly—little Nelly—  
Shall I apprehend  
How the autumn's full fruition  
Comes to perfect end ?

Richer make the glowing gloaming  
With the promised fruit,  
Richer make the blessing coming  
After weary suit.

Little Nelly—darling Nelly—  
Surely now I know  
Why the Master called the children  
To Him, long ago.  
Make the winter gloom less weary  
With caressing wiles,  
Make the winter gloom less dreary  
With the light of smiles.

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*LINES IN MEMORIAM.*

M. M'Q. R. H., OB. NOV. 1869, ÆT. 22.

WOE follows even when the reaper Death  
Gathers the full-ripe, seasoned sheaf. But when  
He puts his sickle in the green and tender corn,  
Before the flush and bloom of summer comes,  
A deeper desolation falls—a gloom  
Unthought of—horror-filled : as when  
The earth was darkened at the full height of noon

By the quick, chilling, and resistless sweep  
Of an eclipse, undreamt of, unforetold—  
When daylight died without a hope of dawn.  
Woe for the husband, early stricken thus !  
Woe for the infant-bud whose opening life,  
Scarce severed from the mother-life, can turn  
Never, in all the forward-stretching years,  
Back to the parent stem, with childhood's clasp,  
And kiss, and soft embracement, and caress !  
Sorrow for so great sorrow finds no words ;  
A silent sympathy alone remains,  
Full of mute eloquence—a voiceless balm  
Of tenderest feeling. And the healer Time,  
Unlike ourselves, says nothing and does much.

---

## THE STAR AND THE STREAM.

MIRROR thyself in the wave, O Star,  
Shine up from the shining stream :  
Re-born in the reflex light, O Star,  
Reappear 'mid the glancing ripples bright,  
Like the deeds of the day in a dream.



Pass on through the bosky shades, O Stream,  
By the wind-stirred sedgy banks ;  
Foam over mimic cascades, O Stream,  
Gleam in the meadows, and gloom in the glades,  
And flash where the mill-wheel clanks.

Firm fixed in the steadfast heaven, O Star,  
Yet glassed in the moving wave,  
Image that steadfast faith, O Star,  
Which up from the tide of sorrow and death,  
Breathes life from an open grave.

Pass on in thy restless course, O Time,  
As the ripples onward glide ;  
Yet mirror the heavenly light, O Time,  
Let the star of faith in affliction's night  
Shine up from thy troubled tide.

---

SONNET.

REV. JOHN COCHRANE, OB. 19TH JAN. 1869, ÆT. 64.

AFTER a faithful priesthood—long confessed  
In all men's sight—forth from the holy place  
Which feebly emblems the Shechinah's blaze,  
Into the inner shrine—the Holiest—

Through the Christ-rended curtain he hath passed.  
And now no more beside the dying bed  
Will that kind voice be heard; no more be shed  
The drops baptismal; never more be cast  
Over two lives the indissoluble chain,  
By him. He rests from labour, and has souls  
Given him for hire. So ever onward rolls  
Time's never-pausing chariot, in its train  
Bearing the old fantastic mask of breath:  
Birth, sorrow, laughter, tears and joy, and—DEATH.

---

DEDICATED TO MISS ANNIE  
RUSSELL, FALKIRK.

I. BIRTHS.

WE bind ourselves to life with wreaths of flowers;  
Buds of fair promise blossom in the spring,  
And childish voices visit us, and bring  
Back the remembrance of our childhood's hours,  
Vivid and fresh as in a morning-dream;  
And little arms around our necks are twined,  
And soft cheeks pressed to ours, till we grow blind  
To all, save the fair promises, which seem

To gild the future, as in recompense  
For sorrows past. And surely it is wise  
To look oftentimes at earth through childhood's eyes,  
And feel within us its unhackneyed sense  
Of credulous enjoyment, and its quick relapse  
Into contentment, after life's mishaps.

## II. MARRIAGES.

We bind ourselves to life with wreaths of flowers,  
Odorous with love and rainbow-dyed with hope ;  
We consecrate a dome of amplest scope  
Wherein to treasure up all that is ours—  
Sweetest and dearest—and we call it home,  
And in it place what fancy fondly deems  
A true divinity—and yet of clay :  
And well if this opinion lasts for aye,  
And time serves not to disenchant our dreams.  
It needs must be that cares and griefs will come,  
And sorrow's cloud above our pathway lower :  
Let love and trust but brighten—and behold  
The darkness turned to light ! That sun has power  
To flush the blackest vapour o'er with gold.

## III. DEATHS.

We bind ourselves to life with wreaths of flowers,  
But summer passes and the autumn comes—  
The heart's-ease petals fall ; the purple blooms  
Fade from love's roses, and the trusted powers

Of friendship fail with the forget-me-not.  
*But death binds us to him.* Day after day  
 Some cherished part of us doth pass away,  
 No more to be, but ne'er to be forgot !  
 So we die daily. So doth death become  
 Not grim and stern, but a most kindly host,  
 And his dim, silent land our wished-for home,  
 Where dwell our dearest ones—not lost—not lost—  
 But only waiting till this dream be o'er,  
 To meet and greet us on the tranquil shore !

---

## HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

BORN 2D APRIL 1805; DIED 4TH AUGUST 1875.

THREESCORE and ten, and then he passed from us—  
 Child all his life, and therefore worthiest  
 To move into the presence of the Lord,  
 Who called the children to Him. Through the range  
 Of all Teutonia's households—through the world  
 Of English-speaking childhood—falls a gloom  
 As the sad words are lightnined through the wire—  
 “The darling story-teller—he is dead.”

What cares the youngster's heart for king or priest ?  
 “Our king,” it says, “our priest has passed away.

The voice that woke in Odense to teach  
The elders what a wisdom underlies  
Our foolishness, and piece our lisping speech  
Into coherency, is hushed, and we  
Sorrow, childwise, for our interpreter,  
Who told our stories in our very words,  
With glimpses of a world we only dreamt.  
And we are left to dream our dreams, and keep  
Our meanings to ourselves, like chirp of birds."

O children! well for you that have the power  
To strain off sorrow through the sluice of tears;  
But for the elders—woe is them! who dares  
To take the passionate budding soul into  
The vexed experience of the full-grown man,  
And now educe the perfect harmony  
That binds the infant to the grandsire's heart?

---

ABSENT FRIENDS.

(SONG.)

THOUGH the rolling of rivers  
And seas may divide  
The friends who once dwelt  
With ourselves, side by side;

Though we think not of seeing  
Or meeting them more,  
Let their memory be fresh  
In our hearts, as of yore!

Let us think of them kindly,  
Since they have gone forth ;  
Their failings went with them—  
They've left but their worth :  
To their faults distance lends  
A more softening tone,  
And memory shall cherish  
Their virtues alone.

May they think of us kindly,  
As we do of them,  
And their love make us stronger  
Life's torrent to stem ;  
Thus, though seas roll between us,  
And mountains may part,  
In the strength of this love  
We're together in heart.

Let us think of *all* kindly—  
The burden of hate  
Will bear down stronger shoulders  
Than ours with its weight ;

But kind thoughts are as seeds  
Which, when scattered abroad,  
Will spring up and make brighter  
Life's wearisome road.

Here's goodwill and a blessing  
On every friend's head,  
With a cheer for the living—  
A sigh for the dead,  
Whose memory yet lingers,  
Though they've fallen asleep—  
As roses, though withered,  
Their fragrance still keep.

Let their names be to us  
As a magical charm,  
Making eyes kindle brighter,  
And cheeks glow more warm.  
Let us drink to them all,  
Whatsoever be their lot—  
Old friends, ay, and new friends,  
May they ne'er be forgot !

## MILLHALL.

*L'Espoir, et encore l'Espoir, et TOUJOURS l'Espoir.*

O BREEZE of the autumn woods!  
Stirring and strewing down the leaves,  
Move through the glen's dank solitudes,  
Where all the frondage grieves  
For the hushed voice of birds, and insects' hum,  
And whisper gently in its dying ear  
The promised greenness of another year;  
Nor be to me inaudible or dumb,  
But bring the solace from thy far-off home  
Of far-off hopes brought near;  
And breathe thy freshness on my brow, and come  
Recalling tones forgot not—dead but dear.

O leaves of the autumn woods!  
Bright with the beauty of decay,  
Flushed with the loveliness that broods  
In clouds when closes day:  
Now death bedecks you with a seemly pall,  
Changing, with Midas-touch, the green to gold,  
And brown, and crimson, and sub-hues untold;  
Fall round me softly, as the dead hopes fall



When life's year shivers in its autumn-chill;  
To death defiance fling—  
"We still shall overcome, shall conquer still,  
And mock thee with the moving breath of spring."

O hope of the autumn woods!  
Woe, if we recognise thee not!  
Woe, if in life's most harassed moods  
Thy solace be forgot!  
They die not, they but make anew their life,  
Of loftier woodage, spreading broader arms,  
Strong with the strength to strive with greater harms,  
Of sterner power to win in sterner strife.  
The lesson of the falling leaves is tale  
Of hope and blessing both:  
We see death life when viewed behind the veil,  
And every season but a step in growth.

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*THE OLD DEAR DAYS.*

HERE'S the prattle of the burn  
As it seeks the Clyde,  
Here's the waving of the fern  
Where the harebells hide;

And the chequered sunshine flickers  
In the lownie den,  
And the lynn's summer under-song  
Fills the birchy glen,  
And my footsteps wander now  
Through the old wood-ways,  
But they want the golden glamour  
Of the Old Dear Days.

Through the summer meadows,  
As of yore, I bound;  
The laverock overhangs me  
In its heaven of sound,  
Pulsing through the tissues  
Of ear, and heart, and brain,  
Till its rapture languishes  
With the overstrain;  
Once I could interpret  
The secret of its phrase,  
But it's lost the mystic meaning  
Of the Old Dear Days.

There's the stillness now within me  
Of a stern content,  
When, after passion's carnival,  
The soul keeps Lent;

Rest comes welcome—welcome—  
After irk and toil,  
Blest above the blessing  
Of corn, and wine, and oil :  
Rest comes welcome—welcome—  
After long delays,  
But this is not what I dreamt of  
In the Old Dear Days.

Cherished faces are around me,  
Love-illumed and dear ;  
Childish laughter comes to greet me,  
Idly musing here.  
Better thus it is, I murmur  
To my carping soul ;  
Wherefore stir the depths where past years'  
Dateless billows roll ?  
But, like Rachel o'er her children,  
Still the heart delays,  
O'er the dead, and therefore dearest,  
Old Dear Days.





## HASSAN'S AMULET.

### FYTTE THE FIRST.

IN the reign of the Magnificent,  
Twin Brother of the Sun and Moon on High,  
The Most Serene and Thrice Beneficent  
Caliph Haroun Alrashid Almyeye—

    In the fair city of Bagdad  
Lived Hassan Abon Zellah,  
A sort of lazy, philosophic fellow,  
Who never thought it worth his while to sigh, or be sad ;  
Although to fortune he was more indebted

    For kicks than coppers ;  
He took whatever fell from luck's mill-hoppers,  
And never fretted.

And though *sans* riches, never sought to scout them,  
But simply cracked his joke—and did without them.  
This was his easy creed—for all that we know,  
Half stolen from Epicurus, half from Zeno.

The Caliph lately, being impecunious,  
Had confiscated the possessions, which  
Were the just patrimony of Ben Zunios,  
An Emir grown suspected (*id est* rich),  
And for that reason  
Guilty (or ought to be) of treason.  
And to make sure he never should want bread  
After, or through, this bit of legislation,  
The Caliph, with extreme consideration,  
Took too—his head.

But somehow, it so happened after this,  
From indigestion or remorse, we do not know,  
His Highness found himself somewhat amiss,  
His appetite impaired, his spirits low ;  
Tried piety and pleasure, both no go ;  
Consulted his physicians—and got worse,  
At which he grew incensed ; as who would not ?  
And, with a vigorous imperial curse,  
Bowstrung the lot.

In short, the case grew such,  
That, through Bagdad,  
The folk began to nod and shrug their shoulders  
(First looking round to see who were beholders).  
The Imaums said his conscience must be bad,  
The courtiers thought it was his temper rather  
—Your courtiers don't believe in conscience much—  
And grew as white as any barber's lather,

And trembled as if in an ague fit;  
And now and then among them there would be  
A solemn shaking heads, as if to see  
That *these* were on their shoulders safe—as yet.

During this time, Caliph Haroun was thinking,  
As frequently sick people do,  
That, in his former life, a screw  
Might have been loose—perhaps even two,  
Or three, or more;  
And when upon this score  
There was no blinking  
The ugly fact,  
His having grabbed the innocent Ben Zunios' pelf  
Was not a thing of which historians would boast;  
Viewed leniently, that is, even by himself,  
It must, at once, be owned a most  
Ungentlemanly act.

So, in this mood, he did determine  
To put down,  
Strictly, all tarry-fingered vermin;  
To make this first of his opinions,  
And to allow in his dominions  
Nor robbery, nor swindling, nor priggling,  
Embezzlement, nor fraud, nor market-rigging,  
Nor larceny, nor defalcations—  
In short, no sort of peculations,

*Save and except the Rights and Customs of the Crown.*

So through the town

In every quarter criers went repeating

THIS PROCLAMATION :

“To all our subjects—dwellers in Bagdad—

To each and all and sundry—good or bad—

From the Commander of the Faithful—Greeting :

Whoso is found convicted of the fact

Of stealing, or of even having tried it,

Shall suffer the full penalty of this Act,

Therefor provided :

INTITULED—THEFT : AN ACT FOR ITS REPRESSION.

The bowstring and the Tigris—doom and tomb—

Without the room

Of an appeal to any Court of Session—

And to the Caliph every sequin of possession.

And that the noble quality of justice

With mercy tempered properly may be,

Hereby we make decree

To be observed by every officer and bailiff

(As witness Mahomet, in whom our trust is);

All those who are not found out *shall go free.*

God save the Caliph.”

FYTTE THE SECOND.

But Abon Zellah must not be forgot.

A porter was his trade, and he did ply it

Industriously enough; sometimes his lot  
Was to be brisk, and sometimes not,  
And by that circumstance was ruled his diet.

Well—like some places nearer hand,  
In Bagdad  
Trade grew bad,  
And Hassan soon reached a condition  
Of inanition,  
Sharper than fortune fated him to stand  
Ever before.  
Of the finest sauce he'd oppressive store—  
As all have heard say,  
Hunger's the finest, far and away—  
But then he had nothing whereupon to try it.

One day it so happened (unlucky day!)  
That, wandering about, he took his way  
Through a path which led by a garden wall.  
The wall was low, and Hassan was tall;  
Flowers and fruits, he saw them all.  
His mouth was watering, his eyes were fixed  
On the tempting fruit—what happened next?  
Hunger urged; he was bound to obey;  
One leap, and he stood under  
The bending trees, and began to convey  
Their luscious burden, gullet-way,  
Promising well and with scant delay,



His long-neglected stomach to stay.  
He bolted and guzzled, and felt as gay  
As a linnet perched on a hawthorn spray,  
Or a lark, new-woke, when the sky grows grey  
With the half-veiled light of the coming day,  
Or an urchin, fresh from school, at play;  
But ere "Jack Robinson" you could say,  
    A voice in tones of thunder,  
No "By your leave" or "Beg your pardon,"  
    But "You blackguard thief"—  
    Hassan shook like a leaf—  
"What do you want in my garden?"

Hassan stated the facts of the case as you  
Have read them—but it wouldn't do ;  
    In fact, it's a difficult job,  
Persuading a man in a red-hot passion,  
When caught in his garden in such a fashion,  
    That you didn't come there to rob.  
In that position you don't feel cool  
    Enough to argue the question;  
And arguments given with a mouth half full  
    Of his finest fruit, the while you plead,  
    Can only succeed  
In stultifying the best one.

So off to the Cadi poor Hassan was hauled,  
Who decided, as clearly as any Bell,  
    That the action fell

To be judged in terms of the new-made law;  
And Hassan was quite appalled

When he saw

The Nubian executioner draw  
Out of his vest, with his sooty paw,  
A bowstring thin, and lithe, and tough.  
Thought Hassan Abon Zellah,  
“A little of that goes far enough  
To satisfy a fellow;  
This surely is coming the sentiment strong  
By rather a trifle, and can't last long.

I'm a gone gander

If this goes on.”

Then aloud: “O Cadi, I make appeal  
To the fountain of justice, never shallow,  
To the Most Serene and Sublime Commander  
Of all the Faithful, who sits on the throne  
To judge aright, in the name of Allah!”

Thus adjured, the Cadi, perforce,  
Allowed appeal, with a very bad grace;  
The gardener, who had growled himself hoarse,  
Grew still more red about the face:

And so they took their course

To the royal hall of justice, where  
Each second day, after morning prayer,  
Till noon was past, the Caliph sat  
Cross-legged on an Indian mat

Bordered with gold, and the sacred green  
Daintily arabesqued between,  
    Dispensing justice and grace  
    After his view of it,  
Somewhat according to the *law* of the case,  
    With a due regard to the *Prophet*.

## FYTTE THE THIRD.

Humbly salaaming before his Highness,  
The Cadi, with proper legal dryness,  
Proceeded to lay before the Court  
A duly muddled, verbose report  
    Of the *where*, and the *when*, and the *how*,  
Of Abon Hassan's heinous apple-stealing ;  
His judgment thereanent with care revealing,  
    And the confounded row  
Kicked up by Hassan thereupon, and his appeal-  
    ing ;  
    Concluding with a flowery panegyric  
Upon the Caliph's wisdom and benignity ;  
A panegyric which, for breadth and height,  
For loyal depth and fervid might,  
    Deserved the dignity  
Of being chanted in a glowing lyric :  
At least (if such a trifle we may mention)  
It richly merited a handsome pension.

"Slave," quoth the Caliph, and therewith did fasten  
Upon poor Hassan  
A most uncomfortable look—"You have appealed  
To us, who sit here, holding both the shield  
And sword of justice; what is there to plead  
That your misdeed  
Should not be punished with law's utmost vigour?"  
(He meant *rigour*.

*Mais entre nous,*

In law there's small distinction 'twixt the two.)  
"We're ready now to hear your exculpation.  
It's not for nothing we are named Al Raschid;  
What have you in extenuation?  
As for this robbing, we're resolved to squash it.  
Our edict thereanent no one shall shirk;  
As you must shortly find to your expense;  
This law shall not be laid upon the shelf.  
Why don't you work  
And trust to Allah? Providence  
Helps him who helps himself."

With all humility responded Hassan, mute  
Till now: "O Caliph; even so—the fruit  
Was there, and as the gardener testifies, I *did*  
Considerably help myself.  
And now, I plead, it's Providence's turn  
Some help to lend."  
At this equivocation justly stern,

The Caliph made a sign  
The case to end,  
By the well-merited, condign  
Penalty of the law. 'Twas *die* and learn.

Two mutes stood out,  
And in a twinkling slipped about  
Poor Hassan's neck, with well-accustomed skill,  
The fatal cord.  
"I bow," said Hassan, "to the Caliph's will.  
He is commander whose hand holds the sword.

"According to the Prophet's holy word,  
As given in Alkoran divine,  
Three times to Mecca's sacred shrine  
My father made his pilgrimage;  
Thrice he the Hadji's garment wore,  
Thrice mingled with the host of them  
Who drunk the waters of Zemzem,  
Thrice made the circlings, three and four,  
Thrice kissed the Kaaba stone :  
Returning from the third, when age  
Its crushing weight had on him thrown,  
He brought with him this flake of jet,  
A prized and precious amulet;  
For whoso wears it may defy  
The dangers of the earth and sky;

The poisoned cup, the canjiar's blade,  
To him is all innocuous made.  
The moon of wealth, the sun of power,  
The stars of all delight, shall shower  
Their influence through life's every hour  
On him who owns this charm of might.  
But only if in Allah's sight  
The temple of his heart be white!  
And every jinn and deey and ghoul  
Shall hold the mastery of his soul,  
If fraud, and wrong, and crime, and sin,  
From him a welcome meet therein.  
Useless to me the gem has been  
From actions vile and thoughts unclean;  
Nay, rather say, than useless worse—  
It bore the predetermined curse  
That waits on mortal who shall dare  
To own the amulet as heir  
While evil makes his heart its lair.  
'Tis all, O Caliph, that can be  
Called mine, and therefore falls to thee  
According to thine own decree.  
By the black Kaaba's kissings three,  
By all the blessings of Zemzem,  
By all the fringes that may be  
Upon the Prophet's mantle's hem,  
I call on Allah to attest  
The valid truth of this bequest.

As thou art just, and justly named,  
As thou art pure and unashamed,  
As thou art lifted far aloof  
From guile's deceit and fraud's reproof,  
As thou can'st never in thy heart  
Be wounded by remorse's dart ;  
With all its gifts of grace and power,  
With all the charms within its dower,  
The precious amulet is thine—  
The bowstring and the Tigris mine!"

With airy, Oriental, exquisite politeness,  
To Caliph Haroun's magnanimity and splendour,  
Hassan made reverential tender  
Of what seemed but a bit of polished coal.  
Of all the powers of bad and good—of darkness,  
brightness,  
Claimed for it, we've no doubt it held the whole,  
Though in a fit of most uncommon tightness.

The Caliph's conscience whispered, "Have a care ;  
The look-out will be deeply, darkly blue  
For you,  
If half of what this fellow says is true ;  
You'd better shirk the thing, and with an air  
Of royal, generous benignity  
Walk quietly, tiptoe, clear out of the snare,  
With grace and dignity."

Haroun turned calmly to the right, where, near  
Stood Giafar (afterwards Lord Burleigh)—Grand  
Vizier—

“Take thou the gem, for long and trusty service.”  
But Giafar, with a gesture brief and nervous,  
With mingled haste and horror shoved aside  
The precious charm, and reverently replied:  
“Dread Caliph, I’d much rather not—much rather;  
I promised on his death-bed to my father  
(He died, so please your Mightiness, last spring)  
Never to—to—take (hem) a—a—anything.  
Here’s Mesrour, under no such sort of promise,  
Give it to him.”

The fact, though true, yet *rum* is,  
*He* didn’t see the beauty of the view;  
In fact the nigger turned in tint a dirty blue,  
And stuttered, “Gorra, massa, dat won’t do.”

The General Commandant of the Forces  
Rejected Hassan’s amulet with curses.  
Be doomed to own that talisman accurst!  
Never to plunder! never “go the burst!”  
He’d put the case in this way, if he durst;  
The Caliph’s orders, for a single day,  
Could not, by any chance, be carried out  
If his (the General’s) hands, in such a way  
Were fettered up and circumscribed about.



Such an idea—always wishing to be civil—  
Showed that the service, sir, was going to the devil!  
Rather than carry that coal he'd be—bowstrung first.

The Chief Imaum (a foreigner) was sent for,  
The thing, its conditions and powers, made explicit;  
He listened to the terms, and promptly went for  
Decided refusal, and "*no sing to do vis it.*"

The loudest howler in the Dervish College  
Was offered it. He said, "Perhaps it may  
Prove valuable to those who've got the knowledge  
To understand it properly, I daresay;  
But as for us—*it doesn't lie our way.*"

Some merchants from the Khan—a goodly row—  
Were brought in and communicated with.  
The gift and terms were argued *con* and *pro*;  
And then the principal (his name was Smith)  
Hemmed thrice, coughed twice, and made a false start  
once.

And then, for self and partners, gave response:  
"If this here talisman (ahem) were made  
Over to us in business and in trade,  
In two short summers  
'Twould *totally destroy the tone of commerce.*"

'Twas passing strange that nobody—not *any* body—  
Would make a bid, but shirked it in the lump;  
They shrank from it, as shrinks a suit of shoddy  
After the ordeal of a thunderplump  
(Copyright *that*—all rights reserved).

'Twas passing strange, none could be nerved  
To make the powerful charm his own,  
Whene'er its penalties were known.  
Was it conscience? or was it humility  
Wrought this self-denying ability?  
No time to guess—but, note this, lastly,  
It tickled the Caliph's fancy vastly.  
He grinned serenely on all around,  
And they bent them to the very ground;  
Then he put on his royalest air and grace,  
And thus dismissed the Court and case:

“It seems to me the fact, friend Hassan,  
That no one here's inclined to fasten  
Tighter about him honesty's band  
Than due conventionalisms demand.  
Since none, then, present, will or can  
Accept your father's talisman,  
With all its penalties annexed,  
But backs out on some slim pretext,  
You must retain the jetty wonder,  
And be forgiven your apple plunder;

And, since your love for fruit is large,  
We place our orchards in your charge,  
With title of Head Gardener Regal,  
And then your pilferings will be legal."

MORAL : Quite plain, and without a doubt—  
All men are honest—who're not found out.





## TO MARY.

WHAT a pettish little fairy  
Is our pretty little Mary!  
And how charmingly she'll pout  
If she's put a bit about.  
And her bright eyes brighter glitter,  
And her rosy lips grow bitter;  
                    And the maid,  
If you dare to contradict her,  
Becomes a silent picture  
Of delightful indignation;  
On the chair she takes her station,  
And she reads—reads—reads—  
And pretends she never heeds  
                    What is said.

Ah, Mary! I regret  
Having angered you—but yet

So pretty is the indignation,  
And so charming the disdain,  
That I'm under strong temptation  
To anger you again.

---

KEEP FRESH THE HEART.

ALTHOUGH we seek in sunny eyes  
Love's light, and find it not;  
Although by friends 'neath far-off skies,  
The thoughts of whom we fondly prize,  
Our memory be forgot;  
Though frowning fate should only bring us  
Griefs to sadden, slights to sting us,  
Love unrequited, friends unkind,  
Let's quaff afresh of hope's wine-cup,  
'Twill ne'er till death be all dried up;  
Time will assuage the smart.  
Hold evermore this rule in mind—  
Keep fresh the heart !

Gird it not round with the icy cloak  
Of cold contempt, disdain, or pride;  
For, as the ivy encircles the oak  
Till all the giant's sap be dried,

So, if around our hearts we bind  
 These shrouds, all life and joys depart.  
 Be wise ; this maxim hold in mind—  
 Keep fresh the heart !

---

THERE'S A BIRD IN BANTON.

(SONG.)

THEY deave me wi' clavers  
 O' that ane and this,  
 And think ilka lassie  
 My fancy maun strike;  
 But guesses o' that kind  
 Aft turn oot amiss;  
 My heart was my ain,  
 And I've gein't whare I like.  
 I dinna misdoot but they're frank,  
 And they're kind o't,  
 And some o' them braw;  
 But I carena a rush—  
 Just tak' this as true,  
 If ye will hae my mind o't,  
 There's a bird in Banton  
 That's worth twa in the bush.

I've walked on the sea-shore,  
I've strayed on the hill,  
I've strolled through the green wood  
When summer was braw;  
And the thochts o' thae auld scenes  
Are cherished, but still  
I ken o' ane dearer  
To memory than a'.  
It's up by Tamrawr,  
And across by the meadows;  
I could gang the hail length o't  
Blindfold at a push;  
But hope's just a Will-o'-the-wisp  
To mislead us.  
There's a bird in Banton  
That's worth twa in the bush.

---

*THE FIRST STOWN KISS.*

(SONG.)

THE memories o' the aulden days,  
Hae a magic strangely soft,  
And fancy to the silent past  
Flies mony a time and aft.

But 'mang the happy thochts there's ane  
Owertaps them a' in bliss,  
Kept warm in memory's cosiest neuk—  
The first stown kiss.

Let auld Time come or let him gang,  
He canna tine us this,  
Nor a' his winters chill the glow  
O' the first stown kiss.

What rapture fa's on youthfu' hearts,  
Like summer's gentlest rain,  
When the wee bit rosebud o' a mouth  
Is prest against oor ain.  
She half draws back, wi' face on fire,  
As if 'twere done amiss ;  
But mony a thing'll be waur ta'en  
Than that first stown kiss.

Let auld Time come or let him gang,  
He canna tine us this,  
Nor a' his winters chill the glow  
O' the first stown kiss.

Oh, years row on, and cares come thick,  
And wrinkles seam the broo,  
And the lichtest joy o' early days,  
Wad buy the brichtest noo.



But aye within our heart o' hearts,

Ilk memory o' bliss

Is faint and feeble by the side

O' the first stown kiss.

Let auld Time come or let him gang,

He canna tine us this,

Nor a' his winters chill the glow

O' the first stown kiss.

It gars an auld man's breath come thick,

And a moistness cloud his een,

When he dreams i' the muckle arm-chair

O' the days that he has seen.

But o' a' the thochts o' the far-off time

Nane dirl his heart like this,

When his wifey's maiden lips he reft

O' the first stown kiss.

Let auld Time come or let him gang,

He canna tine us this,

Nor a' his winters chill the glow

O' the first stown kiss.



## MARY O' BANKIER.

(SONG.)

AIR—"O' a' the Airts."

DOON by whare rashy Bonny rins—  
I lo'e it for her sake—  
There lives my love—my dream by night,  
My idol when awake.  
And lang as Bonny's waters row  
In ripples bright and clear,  
Sae lang my love will cling to her,  
Sweet Mary o' Bankier!

E'en as the dove afar set free  
To seek her distant nest,  
So every fancy flies to her,  
Wi' her alane to rest.  
There's mony rare, there's mony fair,  
But she alane is dear.  
Heaven's blessing on her winsome face,  
Sweet Mary o' Bankier!

And yet it's no her winsome face,  
Though fairer few there be;  
Nor yet her form's light, airy grace  
That wiled my heart frae me;

But, warm and true, a noble heart  
Shines through her een sae clear;  
Gi'e me that heart, I'd laugh at fate,  
Sweet Mary o' Bankier !

---

*LINES TO THE MISSES SAMUEL.*

You came with the sunshine,  
You go with the rain,  
And the meeting brought joy,  
And the parting brings pain.  
This rule the world's wisdom  
Must ever obey—  
"Let the sunshine depart,  
And our friends drop away."

'Tis thus with all bright things  
And dear things on earth;  
Night closes our daylight,  
And sorrow our mirth.  
And we sigh as each short-lived  
Delight disappears;  
"It came in all smiling,  
And went out in tears."

## TO THEE.

(SONG.)

WINTER comes, and winds are wandering  
Wildly o'er the dreary earth,  
Singing with their gusty voices  
Autumn's death and winter's birth.  
What care I? the blustering winds  
And the noise of pattering rains  
Cannot move me whilst the music  
Of thy softest voice remains.

Winter comes, and snows are falling,  
Now the frost king rules the plain,  
And hath bound the streams and waters  
In his silent silvery chain.  
What care I? the chilling cold  
And the nipping winter wind  
Cannot move me, if thy welcome,  
When we meet, be warm and kind.

Winter comes, and skies are scowling,  
Earth is sad and sorrowful;  
Birds are silent, trees are leafless,  
And the air is dark and dull.  
What care I? all nature's frowning,  
Sunless skies, and cheerless plains,  
Bring no gloom or sorrow, while  
The sunshine of thy smile remains.

## S O N G.

SEIZE, oh seize with nimble fingers  
The passing hours,  
And with light wreaths of flowers  
Bind the brightest, whilst it lingers,  
Whilst we call it ours !

Bathe, oh bathe its glowing pinions  
In bubbling wine ;  
Even while we speak 'tis fled  
To the sombre past's dominions,  
With its brethren dead !

---

## S O N N E T.

THERE only are two things on which the eye  
May gaze for ever, and not know the blight  
Of languid, listless, dull satiety,  
Which cankers in the core of each delight,  
And casts a ghastly film athwart our sight ;  
Changing light laughter into heavy sigh,  
Until our very souls are dead before we die.

But this fell fiend, whose far o'erarching wing  
Distils a venom-rain, which doth besmutch  
With foul impurity the heart's wellsprings  
Of happiness (or what might yet be such,  
Had they free current and the sunshine's touch),  
Over these twain to it is no power given—  
The changing face of the beloved and the wide  
vault of heaven.

---

## S O N N E T.

MANY a time, ay, many a time, and oft,  
A golden dream has flushed before my eyes,  
Glowing with all the hues of paradise,  
Glowing with love's own lustre, pure and soft,  
In the still night, a fair, fond, phantom-face ;  
Even as the dawn dies into perfect day,  
So that fair phantom-face hath passed away  
Into the sweet reality, yet I can trace  
Numberless dear remembrances, and see  
Clearly, through all the mists of bygone years,  
Love luring me through darkness on to thee ;  
And now that visionary face endears  
Infinitely the more, since I have known  
Rapture in finding that it was thine own.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF PETER  
LUCKIE, A SCHOOL COMPANION.

WAS he not wise, that ancient sage,  
In Greece's happier days who sung :  
" They who the Father's love engage,  
Are blest in dying young ? "

The scorn, the anguish, and the strife,  
The sickened heart, the careworn brow,  
The hopes in disappointment rife,  
That lure our footsteps on through life,  
It is not *theirs* to know.

With thoughts like these I sought to quell  
The sadness on my soul that fell,  
When first I learned his death ;  
But vainly preached philosophy ;  
I could not stifle down the sigh,  
Nor stanch the moistening of the eye,  
Nor calm the troubled breath.

The young, the beautiful, the loved, hath perished,  
Like some fair bud an early spring hath cherished,  
Nipped by a lingering winter-blast !  
Ah ! well do I remember him.  
My heart is full, my eyes are dim  
With phantoms of the past,

For memory, like a potent witch,  
By strongest incantations,  
Calls up again my school-days, rich  
In dear associations.  
Ah! many a loved, but now lost form  
Glides in before my sight,  
When the boyish heart throbbed quick and warm,  
And the boyish eye was bright;  
And he, the lost one, 'mid the rest,  
By all beloved, by all caressed,  
To share our pastime prest the game or lightsome  
jest.

Alas! the lapse 'twixt *then* and *now*!

What thoughts in these words lie,  
No more shall sorrow cloud his brow,  
Nor mirth light up his eye.

Alas! alas! but what availeth grief

On our part?

Much! for it brings a chastening relief

To the heart.

Mourn him; but not with such vain sorrow  
As they who mourn of hope forsaken;  
He hath but gone before, and we to-morrow  
The same path may have taken.

Weep for him—loved of many! tears bring calming  
To the heart writhing 'neath affliction's sway;  
Each honey-drop that falleth is embalming  
His memory in our hearts, never to pass away.



## BEAUTIFUL EYES.

(SONG.)

BEAUTIFUL eyes, that swim and dance  
In your liquid radiance,  
Ever be lit up with joy and mirth,  
Laughing and glancing starry stars of earth.  
Beautiful eyes, violet eyes,  
Shine on one softly, beautiful eyes !

Deep in the soul's most secret cells,  
The spirit of love in silence dwells ;  
But his presence we see in glimpses through  
Your fairy portals of tenderest blue,  
Love's light betraying—beautiful eyes !

Tell-tale eyes, whose lustre soft,  
Trembles like those orbs aloft,  
Light up my soul with your softest flame,  
Evermore changing, yet ever the same ;  
Light up my pathway, beautiful eyes !

## COULD I FORGET!

(SONG.)

AIR—" *Good news from Home.*"

COULD I forget ! could I forget  
The gladsome dreams which once were mine,  
My bosom might be happy yet,  
And worship find a truer shrine,  
And hope with golden lustre shine :  
But memory will not, will not sleep,  
The wounds have rankled all too deep ;  
Still time might have some solace yet,  
Could I forget ! could I forget !

Could I forget ! could I forget  
The anguish of this drear regret,  
Hope's torch might be rekindled yet,  
Could I forget ! could I forget !

I deemed the hopes that once I nursed  
The rosy flushing of the morn,  
It was but the Aurora's light that burst,  
And scattered o'er the sky was borne,

A pallid gleam's uncertain track,  
Which made the blackness yet more black;  
Still joy might light my pathway yet,  
Could I forget ! could I forget !

Could I forget ! could I forget  
The anguish of this drear regret,  
Hope's torch might be rekindled yet,  
Could I forget ! could I forget !

Without a hope, without a fear,  
For Fortune's smile or Fortune's frown,  
My heart is like the autumn drear,  
Its leaves of hope are sere and brown.  
But once the sullen winter's through,  
Old earth will laugh in verdure new ;  
So spring might chase my winter yet,  
Could I forget ! could I forget !

Could I forget ! could I forget  
The anguish of this drear regret,  
Hope's torch might be rekindled yet,  
Could I forget ! could I forget !



## MY PROPOSED NEW PHILOSOPHY.

“ If Thou wilt, let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.”

LET us build three tabernacles, and adore  
New gods, and walk in a new way ;  
For those whom I have worshipped heretofore  
Have proven vile and faithless—gilded clay.

Uprear the first and lordliest to *Scorn!*  
Scorn of the abject worms, that smile and hurt,  
Crawling 'twixt heaven and earth, till they be borne  
Into congenial darkness—dirt to dirt.

And consecrate the next to *Truth!* though all  
Be hollow-hearted, smiling lying smiles,  
Plain honest truth but guide us, and I shall  
Be disentangled from these circling wiles.

And build the last to *Self!* for I have sought  
Too long and vainly others' help to be.  
Soul, seek thine own delights, though they be bought  
With others' griefs, what ruth have they for thee?

FRAGMENT.

THUS Nature is the ladder whereupon  
 We mount; and each ascent doth bear us  
 Nearer and nearer to the Mighty One,  
 Who, step by step, doth thus prepare us,  
 Dimly to view His glories. Naught  
 By sard-like leap, or bound, or sudden thrust  
 Is by the mighty mother wrought,  
 But all in graduation just.  
 How high may we not rise, if deep and firm our trust !

---

VALENTINE.

OCH! darlint, 'tishn't civil  
 Thus to worry a poor devil:  
 Sure my heart's in a very bad way;  
 It's all with a faver  
 Of love for you, you misbelaver,  
 That I can't get nayther rest night nor day.

Faith! I dote upon your beauty,  
 From your wreath down to your shoetie:

Don't you beat the other girls all to fits;  
But what's the use of spaking?  
Darlint! sure my heart is breaking—  
But you're welcome, Meg Mavourneen, to the bits.

If things go any further,  
Troth! the upshot will be murther—  
You'll be tried and condemned for your charms;  
And 'twould give no repentance,  
If this should be your sentence—  
“Imprisonment for life”—in my arms!

---

## THERE IS A STAR.

(SONG.)

THERE is a star outshining  
All other orbs of night,  
And many a fond one pining  
Has blessed its gentle light.  
With a serenest splendour  
It greets us from above,  
And hopes and memories tender  
Come with the star of love.

Like to silver censer,  
By angels hung on high,  
Its lustre grows intenser  
The darker grows the sky.  
And should the worldling's malice  
Desponding fancies move,  
There's a blessing and a solace  
In the gentle star of love.

Sometimes the heavens are shrouded  
From utmost verge to cope,  
Sometimes the heart is clouded  
With griefs that see no hope;  
But pleasant thoughts returning,  
These darksome fears remove,  
And soon again, clear-burning,  
Out shines the star of love.

Our eyes with earnest poring  
To earth are too much given;  
Let us, with souls upsoaring,  
Look oftener up to heaven.  
And steadiest and clearest  
Of all that shine above,  
And brightest still, and dearest,  
Is the silvery star of love.

## SONG.

DARK memories in our bosoms  
Lurk deep and will not fly,  
As in the fairest blossoms  
The canker poisons lie.  
A breath, a word, a trifle,  
Wake thoughts with power to blast,  
And vainly would we stifle  
The memory of the past.







## M A N.

O MAN! whoe'er thou art, be thou not proud;  
What art thou, and what hast thou, that thine heart  
With aught should be uplifted? Doth the crowd  
Of nature's workings, cast on every part,  
Around, above, into thy being dart  
A knowledge of superiority?  
Are they so very low that thou shouldst be so high?

Answer when thou art questioned—art thou strong?  
Canst thou control old ocean's ordered flow?  
Canst thou restrain the wind's most solemn song,  
Or quench in night the fire-mount's lurid glow?  
Or, when the earthquake groans and writhes below,  
Wilt thou ordain it in its course to stay?  
And will it list thy words, and will it them obey?

Strength springs from wisdom. Is thy heart then wise?  
Canst thou narrate the origin of things,  
Or lure the Iris from the weeping skies?  
Is thy mind subtle? can it pierce the springs  
Of thought and matter? With a seraph's wings

Canst thou uprise and probe the mystery  
Of the dim future-time? O worm, wilt thou reply?

There is a voice for ever in thy heart,  
Urging thee, "Be thou happy;" this the end  
All aim at; but their instruments oft thwart  
Accomplishment—not more from want of art  
Than lack of fitness in themselves innate,  
Joined to that earthly sense which makes possession  
sate.

---

## HYMN TO EROS.

OH thou, who in the earlier days of earth  
Wert worshipped as a god, divinest love!  
Hear me when I lift up my voice to thee,  
And seek thine aid, and pray deliverance  
From the fierce storm of thought that makes  
My heart sick with an incessant aching.

And shall I bless or curse thee? is the light  
Which flushes o'er my soul the roseate dawn,  
Of a new day of rapture, or but only  
The lurid gleam of a volcano  
Heralding on lava-stream of bitterness,

Which will flow darkly o'er my heart, and leave it  
Scorched, scarred, and withered, and all desolate,  
Herbless, flowerless, when the dew of heaven  
Shall fall with its soft healing nevermore?

I have no puling rhyme wherewith to hail  
Thine influence; no soft, hurried prayer,  
No well-chosen string of sounding sentences;  
These I commit to fools who have but dreamed  
Of thee and thy divinity; but I,  
Who know thee, and am full of thee, whose soul  
Is sick and faint, even to agony,  
With thy pervading presence—I, with whom  
Thou hast been so familiar, day and night,  
In waking thoughts and dreams of sleep, all times,  
And moods of mind, I call on thee aloud  
With a stern voice of passion, for I call  
Forth from the vexed abysses of a soul  
Warring with doubt, and jealousies, and fears,  
Whence a soft tone would be as faintly heard  
As 'midst the roar of a strong cataract's torture.

Thou art the soul of earth. Its glens and hills,  
Its many waters, and its loud-voiced winds,  
Would sleep in death and silence without thee;  
'Tis thou who dost endow them with delight.  
The beauty of the earth is in the eye,  
And not in what it contemplates; and thou

Art light to the dim eyeballs, and thou floatest  
Invisibly round all we see, enrobing  
The laughing waters, and green fields, and wood-  
lands,  
And the star-peopled sky, with loveliness.

All things speak of thee. The soft evening wind,  
Laden with stolen fragrance, is thy sigh;  
Thy smile makes warm the sunshine, and the song  
Of birds is but thy tenderest tones of bliss  
Murmured in sleep. But thou delightest most  
To harbour in the loved one's face, and laugh  
Merrily from her eyes' blue liquid depths,  
And frolic in her sunny smile, and gird  
Each graceful gesture of her stately form  
With a divinest atmosphere of love.

But with the sun there cometh evermore  
The shadow, and with thee, O sovran love!  
Come jealousy, and doubt, and a strong sense  
Of worthlessness. Alas! alas! what hope  
Is there to gladden me? if I look up  
To the dim sky, there shines not one faint star  
To cheer or guide. O foolish heart of mine!  
Thou hast no claim in loving, worshipping,  
Well nigh adoring her; for all must love her,  
And if she smile on thee, doth she not smile  
On all? O fool, to dream thou couldst be loved.

Yes, I say this with a true soul. There may  
Be one whom she doth love with an affection  
That passes infinitely her thought of me,  
But there can never be on all the earth,  
'Mong all the multitude of men that live,  
One who can love her as I love her, for  
She is to me, as 'twere, another life,  
A second soul; there is but one sweet face  
In all the world to me, and that is hers;  
She is the sea in which each stream of thought  
Is swallowed up and ends. But like a cloud  
Doubt hangs upon my heart, and darkens it  
With a grim shadow. I wander in the night.  
O tyrant love! will the dawn never come?

---

*LIFE AND DEATH.*

(A DIRGE.)

OH river of life! oh river  
That flowest for ever,  
On—ever on.  
No stemming nor breasting  
Thy waves' haughty cresting;  
No pausing, no resting,  
None—no none.

The willows, the sad, sad willows  
Droop over thy billows,  
Until thy stream,  
Scarce seen through their number,  
Looks darksome and sombre,  
And sullen as slumber  
Without a dream.

Oh land of sweet death! oh best land!  
Home of the dead,  
Beyond life's dark billow,  
Beyond grief's dark willow,  
In thee would I pillow  
My aching head.

---

## THE FAREWELL.

SOUL of my lute! mine olden friend!  
One wailing song—but one—the last!  
One backward glance before I rend  
The ties that bind me to the past.  
Now summer's skies their blue impart,  
And summer's blossoms opening swell,  
But to the summer of the heart  
I bid for aye farewell, farewell.

Soul of my lute, voiceless so long,  
Before thy strings be all unstrung,  
Breathe into verse one last sad song,  
Though discords stray thy tones among.  
The heavy eye is dim with tears,  
The bursting heart will throb and swell,  
But I can bid to all my fears  
And hopes alike farewell, farewell.

Since 'tis so fated be it so;  
Strength will not fail me in my need  
To bear me up beneath this woe:  
And though the heart may wily bleed,  
I'll teach my lips a hollow smile,  
And mock the thoughts I cannot quell,  
And give the world back guile for guile,  
And bid old Faith farewell, farewell.

It was my hope, fond, foolish dream,  
That love might purchase love again;  
I thought that smiles meant what they seem,  
And there was one who would not feign.  
But Eve a dowry of deceit  
Bequeathed her daughters when she fell,  
Their smile's a lie, their sighs a cheat;  
To smile and sighs farewell, farewell.

## D R E A M S.

"We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep."—*Tempest*.

Is it asleep or awake that we dream?  
Who shall take up the tale and say?  
Truly I know not whether  
The visions of night, or the hopes of day,  
The thoughts of the dusk, or the thoughts of the  
gleam,  
Are quickest to fade and wither.

Is it awake or asleep that we dream?  
Friendship is tried and proven vain;  
Doubt, and mistrust, and sorrow  
Sunder the links of friendship's chain;  
Rent ties chase each other in endless stream,  
From weary morrow to morrow.

Is it asleep or awake that we dream?  
Is it in love we place our trust?  
What night-dream so deceiving?  
Apples of Sodom—ashes and dust—  
Youth's Fata Morgana, and age's theme  
Of disenchanted grieving.



Is it awake or asleep that we dream?  
Following hope's alluring beck,  
    With footstep fast and eager,  
We take our path through ruin and wreck  
To a dreary waste, at whose bleak extreme  
    Dismay and death hold leaguer.

Is it asleep or awake that we dream?  
Witness gaiety's votary crowd;  
    Witness the mad endeavour,  
Ixion-like, to embrace the cloud,  
To bask for a while in the accursed beam,  
    Then whirl on the wheel for ever.

Is it by day or by night that we dream?  
In both—in both—through both there creep  
    Shade of sorrows and errors.  
To His beloved He giveth sleep;  
O gift most worthy the Supreme!  
    That sleep unscared by terrors.

---

## THE ENIGMA OF TIME.

JEALOUSLY clutched to thy breast, O Time!  
Thou bearest a scroll, as yet unsealed;  
*When* shall the sun-clock index the chime,  
That brings the fiat, "Be it revealed?"

*Will* it be *ever* unsealed, that scroll,  
To human eyes, that they see the end?  
Will the dreary mystery of life unroll  
*Ever*, that we may comprehend  
The awful enigma and secret of time?

Wealth grows greater, and savagedom grows  
Greater and greater, day after day;  
Almsgiving nursing it, till it knows  
A hunger that alms shall never allay.  
Daily the hypocrite flourisheth,  
Daily the liar and cheat grow rich;  
Thus stands the case—no matter what saith  
The preacher, mumbling dead words, by which  
He would reveal the enigma of time.

Cotton, and iron, and coal, are strong;  
Cotton, and iron, and coal—are they wise?  
They can whirl the wheel of trade along;  
Can they hush the storm of poverty's cries?  
*Caveat Emptor*—so says John Bright;  
*Caveat Vendor*—rather say I.  
Perish our trade on left and right,  
If it can only build on a lie—  
This is *no* secret of thine, O Time!

N E L L Y.

LAUGH out, little Nell, with your grandmother's laugh,  
And the trick of your grandmother's eyes,  
Half-waken the dreams of the future, and half  
Of the days that are long gone by;  
Toss up in the sunshine your sunshiny curls;  
Oh that the cares of the coming days,  
The months of sorrows, the years of perils,  
May be tossed as lightly away.

---

WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF  
MR ROBERT BUCHANAN,

WHO DIED DECEMBER 31, 1875.

DEAD—as the year was dying,  
In gusty wind and lashing rain!  
He has laid down the weariness of life—  
The fret, and the grief, and the pain.  
For many a day, wherein for him  
Lay any charm to make life loved?  
The coldness of the shadow grim  
Chilled him and would not be removed.

In truth, with death's companionship  
He walked his way these later years,  
Until he saw life's hope-stars dip  
In darkness all their radiant spheres,  
And only faith, afar could see  
The star that hangs o'er Calvary.  
Dead—as the year was dying.





## THE RIME OF THE WICKED EARL.

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### NOTE.

AN Ayrshire legend supplies the essential outline of this rime. The supernatural element is taken very much as it is found in the old story ; but it would not be difficult to accept the facts in their full integrity, and explain them without the aid of any spiritual agency, except so far as there is in every man a spiritual agency, hitherto uncaught in the finest meshes of the metaphysical web—an agency and power apprehended of all, comprehended of none.

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### PROEM.

In lonely moorland glens grey toothless crones  
Mumble out vague and incoherent tales,  
In most monotonous, dull undertones,  
Reiterated till attention fails.

Broken and caught up like a ravelled thread,  
Some scandal of grim lord or lady gay,  
Magnified through the mist of years long dead,  
Distorted into doubtful disarray.

Laughter and terror going hand in hand,  
And retribution bringing up the rear,  
Like the lame laggard of a flying band,  
That only follows for the following fear.

For we may mark in all these tales antique,  
How firm the faith which the narrators hold,  
That though despised, and trampled on, and weak,  
Under the might of force, or fraud, or gold,

The curse of unjust suffering rises up,  
And will not be restrained, but drop by drop  
Distils its venom'd essence, till the cup  
Of retribution brims up to the top.

And that this life which sees the ill deed done,  
Sees also the ill end that follows sure;  
Impatient thought and vain! That there is One  
Who will avenge the friendless and the poor

We know full well; but not the less we know,  
That it is *after* death the judgments come,  
And that they cannot fail to come; and so  
Our querulous impatience should be dumb.

Once on a time I lived among old books,  
And heard old stories rhymed o'er day by day,  
Reading the part in dim forgotten nooks,  
Sequestered from the dusty, hot highway;

Until the quaint old language did become  
As a familiar friend, whose aspect rough,  
At first cross-grained, and with a touch of gloom;  
Morose, forbidding—ay, and somewhat gruff,

Grows lovable on near acquaintanceship,  
And soft and sweet beneath the gnarled rind;  
And from whose grim, sarcastic, shrivelled lip  
Falls consolation, well advised and kind.

So in the telling of this old-world rime,  
It may be pardoned me that I did seek  
To link some old-world phrases in its chime,  
And cast its numbers in a mould antique.

---

FYTTE THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

As the bride delights in the bridegroom, so the old earth delights and evermore will delight in the lusty sun ; yea, even till a new choir of the morning stars shall rejoice over the new earth and the new heavens. On a Sabbath in the old killing time, an aged man sat in Rylston Haugh, and read anent the passion of our dear Lord. Earl Sellis of Tralean, being advised of his contumacy, seeks him. The old man wots not of their coming, for his spirit, in waking trance, sees the woful spectacle at the Holy Rood, and the snare is gathered round him. The gladness of life has long since fallen from him, like the greenery from the trees in autumn ; and whatsoever of hope remains, points upwards, like a bare fir forest. He curses the earl by that Power who gives to the wind-sower a full harvest ; and thereupon falls asleep.

The stars are blanched before the dawn,  
And glimmer cold and white;  
And the sky grows pallid with a film  
Of grey and ghostly light,  
Until the fiery flush lights up  
Cantyre's bare, ridgy steeps,  
And the laverock, from the dew-wet sward,  
To meet the day-god leaps;  
Large orb'd and red, half vapour-hid,  
He glints the mists with gold,  
Yet ever upward surely bends  
To his noonday hold.

It was the noon of the holy day,  
The Sabbath of the Lord,  
And an old man sat in a sheltered nook  
And conn'd the Holy Word.  
Only in secret durst he read,  
Only in secret pray,  
For the Prelatists sorely vexed the saints  
In that evil day.

It was the noon of the holy day,  
And forth Earl Sellis rode;  
And following him in warlike trim,  
With reckless bearing, stern and grim,  
Went ritters five abroad.



By ridge and path, through copse and strath,  
    They rode for many a mile;  
The grey depths of the earl's cold eye  
    Bright with a cruel smile.  
He led them on, nor e'er turned round,  
    Nor spake through all the while:  
Across the dreary upland moor  
    Their weary way they made,  
On to the edge of a deep ravine,  
    Where further course was stayed.

Their leader sprang from his horse and spake;  
    "We must on foot," quoth he.  
They tethered their steeds with the bridle-reins  
    To the fairy's hawthorn tree,  
And clambered down the steep glen side,  
    Through hazel-clumps and fern;  
With hand and knee they clambered down,  
    Until they reached the burn  
That slid o'er the moss, along and across,  
    With many a brawling turn.  
Then up the glen, along the stream,  
    With wary steps and slow;  
The ravine narrowed to a gorge,  
    And darker it did grow;  
It seemed they did, in a few brief strides,  
    From noon to gloaming go.

The old man reads in his lownie nook  
To evite the evil law;  
The Book on his knees, and his brow in his hands,  
In the gloom of Rylston Haugh.  
His body was there in the dim wood shade,  
Abstracted all and still,  
But his soul was with the multitude  
That hooting, and jeering, and mocking stood  
On the cursed Judean hill;  
Whilst writhing in woful agony,  
Three men on high are raised,  
And a few sad women, wailing sore,  
Lie on the ground abased.  
To his spirit's ear the scoff and jeer  
Came from old Jewry's crowd,  
But in sooth the ear of the body too  
Met a scoff and a jeer as loud:  
"Doth the old dotard sleep?" quoth they,  
"Or lies he in a dwam,  
Clean doitered with the drowsy lilt  
Of a canting, whiggamore psalm?"

With meaningless stare he eyed the band,  
A moment and no more,  
Then closed the Book, and rose to face  
The fate that glared before.  
They hauled him forth to an open space:  
Never a word spake he:

Till three stood out with firelocks raised,  
Then he sank down on his knee;  
And his prayer rose up to the throne of God  
Like a frost-mist from the sea.  
The word was given—the volley fired—  
The echoes of the wood  
Awoke at the sound, and each with each  
Did wage a noisy feud.  
In the death-throe he writhed—his mouth  
Welled full of the warm blood.  
He clutched the grass—he gasped to speak;  
But his mouth was filled with blood.  
“And prays he yet?” jeered grim Tralean;  
“His tongue can patter well;  
I trow his ben’son will be changed  
To curse with book and bell.”

When changed with hate, or woe, or love,  
A power in the heart doth lie,  
To give the might of an angel’s tongue  
To a mute glance of the eye.  
That glance now met Tralean’s bold look,  
Clear, calm, and stern, and high,  
And graven for aye on Tralean’s black heart,  
That glance might never die!

A power seemed to enter the dying man,  
A spirit not of himself,

As when a corse is tenanted  
By some avenging elf.  
His right hand up he tossed to heaven,  
From his mouth he spat the blood,  
And his solemn eye glared steadily  
At Sellis, where he stood :  
“ Earth is nigh weary of thy works,  
Of all thou art accursed :  
Thy God, thyself, thy fellow-men  
For judgment are athirst.  
The blood of the saints whom thou hast slain,  
Cries up from out the dust.  
The vintage of wrath is pressed for thee,  
The dregs, and the wine, and the must.  
Thine eye hath mocked mine agony,  
’Twill one day be thine own ;  
In keener pangs thou’lt writhe, and yet  
Thy tongue shall patter none.”

Down sank the hand, the eye grew dim,  
And fixed and still the face.  
His body to the earth and air—  
His soul to Jesu’s grace.

FYTTE THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

Three years pass away, three circlings of the appointed seasons, ordained from of old; and Earl Sellis becomes a name muttered in bitterness of heart, and with sore loathing. On a time he was returning to Tralean Castle, when the flushed sun stoops to the west, behind the hills of Cantyre. He falls into a mood of deep musing; but that comes which awakens memory, who hath an easily-broken slumber. A voice pierces the earl's soul, at the which he is mightily moved, and stands a space glamoured; but anon flies, as if fiend-chased, to Tralean Castle, and swoons by reason of his great perturbation.

With garments loose, and hair unbound,  
The Summer danced along;  
And tawny Autumn followed straight  
With a glad harvest-song;  
Till Winter drave her forth, and held  
The earth in icy chain.  
But the young Spring warred with the gruff old  
carle,  
And overthrew his reign;  
And lured the flowers from the frost-freed ground  
By many a kind device,  
And nursed them tenderly: and thus  
The seasons circled thrice.  
Three years rolled on, and Sellis' name  
Was cursèd everywhere:

The husband, sire, and widow's moan  
Oft woke in sore despair.  
But bide the time! such cries as these  
Are wasted not in air.

At early dawn he hied him forth  
On some ungodly quest,  
And ere he homeward turned his rein,  
The sun lay in the west.  
With foam-flecked chest and reeking flank,  
The gallant steed stretched on,  
Now dim in the wood's fast-waning shade,  
In the red gleam bathed anon.  
In deepest thought Earl Sellis rode,  
Nor ever looked around.  
With sudden shock he woke—his steed  
Had stumbled o'er a mound.  
Quick he reined up, and wistly gazed  
Eftsoons to left and right;  
And a scene that memory did not love  
Affronted there his sight.  
No lettered stone on the little mound  
Betold who slept below.  
And wherefore should Earl Sellis start?  
Why shiver coldly so?  
A hoarhaired man had perished there  
Upon a summer day,

And the memory of his latest glance  
Had never passed away.

And lo! a voice brake forth, and spake—

It held the earl in chain—

“Must blood cry up to Abel’s God

For ever, and in vain?

The truth of him who cursed thee here

Shall sternly proven be.

Naught now remains to thee but this,

Thy well-won weird to dree.”

Whether it was a sprite of God

Who spoke these words of dole,

Or the evil power who tempted him,

Or the voice of his own soul,

It is not surely mine to wist;

But with bitter agony

It moved his mind, as a fierce north wind

Tosses a lonely tree.

As one upon a rock who hangs

Over a rushing lynn,

And, ’midst the dizziness of brain

Wrought by the whirl and din,

Doth feel an impulse keen to leap

The seething waters in;

And so he trembles as he lies

Upon the rocky shelf;

But up he springs, with shuddering filled,  
And flies, even from himself,  
With frantic speed, nor ever round  
Doth he his eyeballs cast;  
With frantic speed, each footstep's pace  
Still fleeter than the last:  
So Sellis stood, so Sellis fled  
From Rylston Wood aghast.

His keen spurs ploughed black Danger's side,  
Nor did his speed abate  
Till, with a groan, the steed fell down,  
Ten strides from the castle gate.  
The warder warned, the knaves rushed out,  
But they to him did seem  
To whirl, and leer, and mock, and grin,  
Like goblins round the bed of Sin,  
In a drunk nightmare dream.

Into the olden hall he reeled,  
And haggardly looked round;  
The glare of lights, the throng of forms,  
The dull, dead, surging sound  
Sent the blood pulsing to his brain;  
And thereupon he swooned.



FYTTE THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

His gentle wife, albeit she doth know the aching of love grown cold, tends the earl dutifully. But with returning sense comes returning torment, and he seeks an anodyne in the wine-cup's ecstasy. He sits alone—of mortal companionship is none with him—and the wine-god's inspiration, and the whirl of his own thoughts, give to the eye a strange double sight, till the mind endows with life things inanimate. But the solacing cup bears him up with a strong hardihood; and the old witch Lilis comes with her charmed goblet. (She was the first wife of Adam, and by her were the evil angels begotten, as witness the ancient Talmudists.) And the seven deadly sins are with her, seemingly each one more beautiful than the idol of the soul's first love-dream, to whom the worshipping spirit has given all fair gifts and richest fancy treasures, that the shrine may be worthy of the adorer; yet is Lilis more beautiful than they. And the compelling power of the accursed verse is upon him. He drinks, and the end comes on.

She had a sweet and winsome face,  
Pale Lady of Tralean,  
And soft and sad as Phoebe's beam  
The light of her blue een;  
For she had known the agony  
Of watching, day by day,  
The first fierce tide of her husband's love  
Ebb, wave by wave, away,  
Till all was gone; and scaith, and scorn,  
And many an insult deep,  
Became her lot, and sighs and tears  
Her lullaby to sleep.

Yet aye she sought in deed and thought  
Her wifely part to keep.  
And now he lay upon a couch,  
The knaves were all withdrawn,  
She tended till the trembling breath  
Came softly like the dawn.  
So he did wake; and memory came  
Again to torture him,  
To din the curse into his ears,  
And daze his eyeballs dim,  
Till round about, in reel and rout,  
All things did seem to swim;  
And he was maddened, and did leap  
With grim oath hurriedly to his feet,  
Striking aside her who had watched  
With ministry so sweet,  
And bade the pantler furnish forth  
Good store of choicest wine,  
That Bacchus might dispel the power  
Of the evil sign.

In every sconce a cresset blazed,  
And all alone sat he.  
Alone! alone with his gnawing thoughts  
Wound round his heart, like grasping knots  
Of hissing snakes—woe's me!  
Seven devils from the lowest pit  
Were blanden company.

The wine-god is a freakish god ;  
And 'tis his frequent whim  
To play strange pranks with the phantasy  
Of those who worship him.  
He giveth it a shaping power  
On the brain strange sights to limn ;  
No limner e'er had shaping power  
Might be compared with him.

'Tis writ of a knight, who dantonless,  
A demon-steed bestrode,  
And straight forgot the rhymèd spell  
That ruled the fiend he rode ;  
So his limbs were rent by the thing hell-sent  
And scattered all abroad.  
Thus with the earl: he lost the rein  
O'er his own imagining ;  
The quaint-carved corbels on the walls  
Seemed leers at him to fling.  
With every tassie of the wine  
The more they grinned and leered,  
And he laughed and quaffed ; for the wine-god  
made  
His votary non-afeard.  
The old Traleans that hung inlimned  
On the panels of Ayrshire oak,  
He saw them start from their frames, as if  
By necromancy woke,

And beckoning stand, with mail-gloved hand,  
Then dimly fade away—  
He laughed aloud at the ghostly crowd,  
As they did fade away;  
And the startled walls in echo back  
Will nothing him dismay.  
And straight a troop of forms sprang up,  
And one did bear a gem-decked cup,  
Seemed full of ruby-flame.  
None ever was so fair as she,  
None ever had such witchery,  
And Lilis is her name.

'Tis she who sits by the lone sea-brink,  
Unwary men to entice,  
By the spell that lies in her woven hair,  
And her luring smile, beyond compare,  
And her snatches of song, antique and rare,  
And her wonderful flashing eyes.  
Wreathing around her a charmed dance,  
Breathing a charmed song,  
A choir of seven sister-elves  
Usher her along.  
With flashing arms, and floating hair,  
And swimming eyes of love,  
To the measure of the cadenced song  
Their glancing footsteps move;

But they, like stars when the moon is up,  
Paled before her of the flameful cup—  
Nor might a contrast prove.  
Up to the earl in mazy whirl  
The spirit sisters glide;  
With motions warm, and free, and bland,  
Like dancing girls of Paynim land,  
And he gazes on the twining band,  
Flush-faced and eager-eyed.  
She who doth bear the goblet rare  
Smiles graciously on him,  
And the wondrous sheen of her lustrous een  
Maketh the lamps burn dim.  
Nearer the earl with every whirl  
The seven and the one glide on.  
Their charmed chant now urgeth him  
To drink from the glamoured goblet's brim  
The wine that ruby shone:  
And that pleasure was his, and perfect bliss,  
When his lips the goblet's brink should kiss;  
And sorrow be no more known.

THE WITCH-SONG.

LUST.

“ Keen the delight of love!  
When lips meet lips,

And the glowing eyes above  
Have a moment's eclipse;  
When heart pants to heart  
With a trembling desire,  
And each glance is a dart  
Winged with passionate fire."

## ANGER.

"Keen the delight of war!  
The stern joy of battle,  
When near and afar  
Sounds the sky-cleaving rattle;  
When face glares into face,  
With knit brows and hard breath,  
And the drunken heart reels  
With the red wine of death!  
And the strong reaper, Mars,  
Stalks his harvest-field thorough,  
Gathering his ripe sheaves  
From furrow to furrow."

## HATE.

"Keen the delight of revenge!  
Which, like a sleuth-hound,  
Will tire not, nor range,  
Till it close with a bound.

From the start to the capture  
The hot hate grows stronger,  
Till it drink in with rapture  
The throes of the wronger."

INTEMPERANCE.

"Keen the delight of wine!  
When it beads up and dances,  
With a flame more divine  
Than a thousand love-glances;  
And like spring through the forest  
It thrills through the veins;  
And of anguish the sorest  
What memory remains?"

AVARICE.

"Keen the delight of power!  
And in wealth 'tis uphoarded.  
Woo me, and this be the dower—  
O'er the worldlings to lord it,  
Gaze on the tawny gold,  
Or the gem's shifting shimmer,  
Till the wine-flush looks cold,  
And beauty's sheen dimmer.

The world, now as erst,  
     Sweats and racks the brain, thinking  
 To quench my fierce thirst,  
     Which grows fiercer with drinking."

JEALOUSY.

"Oh! the glare of the weary day,  
     The gloom of the weary night,  
 And the heart that eats itself away,  
     And of dolour makes delight.  
 And the sting of the sleepless snake,  
     Nestled in the breast;  
 Waking to shudder, sleeping to ache,  
     Never to rest!"

PRIDE.

"My sisters move with aiding arms  
     That interlace and meet!  
 I move along; my stronger charms  
     Are in themselves complete."

SLOTH.

"Keener than all the delight  
     Of deep, deep rest!  
 Which falls like the night  
     With its dew on the breast.



Even as to the broad ocean  
All water-streams tend,  
So each work and emotion  
Here hath its end!"

LILIS.

"Dark of soul! such as we love—  
With a curse upon thee—as on us—  
We have ever been with thee—unseen but near—  
Till the charm was wrought, whereby we appear  
Visibly to thee—now—and thus.

Drink and prove  
That in the sphere of our chalice here  
Is treasured up, by an alchemy rarest,  
Each delight thou holdest most dear,  
And a balm for every ill thou bearest!  
The dew of a thousand kisses,  
The soul of a thousand sighs,  
The thrill of a thousand blisses,  
The lust of a thousand eyes,  
Are as naught—yea, less than naught,  
To the Elysium that lies  
In this wine: and my cup is overfraught."

I cannot tell how sweet their song:  
It had compelling power and strong,

Like every song of sin.  
And as one drinks the sunshine clear  
Who long hath pined in duress drear,  
Earl Sellis drank it in.  
He drank it in, and it did sway  
His soul with subtle craft:  
He clutched the cup, he tossed it up,  
And sought an eager draught.

He had not held the flaming wine  
A moment to his lips,  
Ere the bright form vanished from his view,  
And the lamps did burn a ghastly blue,  
And all things wore an eerie hue,  
As in a sun eclipse:  
And sounds there were came wandering by,  
The sound as of one long, wailing sigh,  
Anon a burst of laughter;  
Which echoed along, each time more strong,  
More bitter far, and dafter;  
He well might ken no mortal men  
E'er laughed that eldrich laughter.  
His veins did each like pulses beat,  
His heart was stricken cold,  
He sought to stand, but straight fell down  
To the floor, with never a sigh or groan,  
Ere two could well be told.

FYTTE THE FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

Through the terror of the long night sits Lady Tralean, and for very fear her tiring-woman is with her. The day comes, and they are loosened from the chain of the night-terror. And the same fear is upon the menials. Consciousness comes again to the earl, and the full weight of the curse presses him sorely for seven days, which is an eternity ; and on the seventh, when the sun leaves the earth to the slumbers of the night-time, and to the vigils of the sleepless stars, and the sad moon (who is wan with sorrow at the rushing song of the fiery planets, which she may in no wise answer—being less noble than they), with fierce convulsions the agony of life forsaketh him, and the curse in this mid-world hath its consummation.

Bitter of heart, in her sad bower  
She sat through all the weird night hour,  
    Sad Lady of Tralean !  
And with her sat her tiring-lass,  
And their hearts drink in, as the weary hours pass,  
    Strange awe, and dread, and teen.  
Half-woke, half-tranced in nightmare's grip  
    They sat, till came the day,  
Like healing dew it fell on them,  
    They twain began to pray ;  
Then the bonds of the thing that seemed so strong  
    Were weak as gossamer :  
All foul things fly when God's dear light  
    Is given to appear.

The varlets flocked all to the common hall,  
Each looked in his neighbour's eyes,  
If his own fear did there appear,  
And his own surprise;  
And spake in whispers, each to each  
Of the strange sound yestreen.  
Slow passed the hour, till from the bower  
Came the pale Lady of Tralean;  
And two went with her to the hall,  
And there Earl Sellis lay,  
As stiff and still, as cold and chill,  
As life had fled for aye.

But he woke again to agony,  
And the work of the curse returned,  
His eyes, like balls of molten lead,  
Within their sockets burned,  
His tongue was withered, and powerless all  
To speak his torments deep,  
And the burning thirst, and the gnawing woe:  
Never again might Earl Sellis know  
The blessing of sweet sleep.  
Thus, wrapped about with tortures keen  
As with a robe, lived Earl Tralean  
While seven long days did roll,  
With never a voice wherewith to noise  
The anguish of his soul.

The close of the seventh day drew on:

He stood on a turret high,  
And looked around to the laughing ground,  
To the sea, and the quiet sky.  
The sun was smiling his parting smile,  
The glad earth drank it in:

Faint in the east the filmy moon

Hung flecked, and horned, and thin;  
And Hesperus alone was seen,  
The silver page of the silver queen;  
And the winds were moving through the trees  
With a low, lulling din:  
O God! so beautiful without,  
So terrible within!

Like the great God who tendeth all,

And by Whom all have been,  
The sun shone ruddily on each—  
On the leaping wave that lit the beach  
With a fantastic sheen,  
On tree, on rock, on mead, on cloud,  
And eke on Earl Tralean.  
Alike on all the red sun shone,  
Never a spot was dim;  
And all were glad, save the cursèd man—  
The quiet was a hell to him.

To his reinless fancy the parting sun  
 A glaring aspect had,  
 And winds, and waters, and rustling leaves  
 Strange tongues to hiss him mad.  
 As a man might seize an unweaned child  
 And press its breath away,  
 A strong convulsion seized the earl:  
 Then sank the orb of day:  
 It shook his limbs, it griped his heart,  
 With straining grip in every part,  
 Till life had passed away!

Three days in pall the body lay,  
 His widowed dame kept weeping,  
 And on the fourth the mourners came  
 To lay him with those of the Sellis name,  
 In the kirk vault sleeping.

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#### FYTTE THE FIFTH.

##### ARGUMENT.

Each Wind hath its own Spirit, and the West Wind hath a gentle Spirit—but over all rules the GREAT ONE, who has appointed laws for their governance, and sure bounds which they may not transgress, though they be freer and more restless than any other of the creatures of the Eternal Lord. For three days

the Winds had been lulled in deep quietude, but on the fourth the fell East Wind flew out and battled with the night-gathered clouds, till the rain was lashed down, and the lightning in a ceaseless shower. And five seafaring men who were caught in the overtaking fury of the tempest, witness a selcouth ferlie—even a ship of fire—which steers straight, against wind and tide, to the Carrick coast, crossing, in its course, the forefoot of the fishers' craft. One has the hardihood to challenge it. The response.

Three days the winds were tranquil,  
Still as the soul of that star  
That follows the sun, and flies the sun,  
Now near, and now afar.  
Then the angry sprite of the strong East Wind  
Rushed out in his stormy car,  
With his blasts all marshalled in array,  
As a chief goes forth to war;  
And the Spirit who dwells in the wandering cloud  
That changes as it drifts,  
Who maketh his throne on the highest zone  
Of his vapour-clifts,  
Was all discomfited thereat,  
And showered down tears of rain,  
Big, bitter drops of angry grief,  
And westward drave amain.  
Each cloud was cloven, and from the cleft  
The leaming fire-balls leapt;  
No pause between each fire-shower keen,  
The thunders never slept.

As a hawk swoops down upon a dove,  
 Even so the tempest smote  
 With madd'ning wind and maddened wave,  
 A hapless fishing boat.  
 Each plank was shook, each rope was strained,  
 All hope had fled each breast,  
 They saw in the gloom a strange thing come  
 Sailing from the west.

Its shape was a ship's—but, gramercy!  
 It seemèd all aflame,\*  
 'Gainst wind and sea, with headlong speed,  
 Due east, the strange thing came.  
 Aghast they stared as it drave on;  
 A ship, and all of fire,  
 Nor did it seem to burn away,  
 But drew on nigh and nigher.  
 Five men were in the fishing craft,  
 And four were choked with fears,  
 Though they had sailed upon the sea  
 Almost since they had left the knee,  
 Well on to forty years.

\* The phenomenon of a fiery meteor has been occasionally seen on the Carrick coast. It is of interest in so far as it may be a matter of speculation whether the (supposed) signal which induced Robert the Bruce to quit Arran and cross over to Turnberry Castle, may not have been of this nature.—See "Lord of the Isles," canto v, st. 17, and Mr Joseph Train's note thereon.



The timoneer was a hardy wight,  
Nor wife nor bairns had he,  
Nor cared he aught for godly things,  
Or godly companie;  
And stoutly he did parley this  
Strange wanderer on the sea,  
“Whence comes the ship, and whither bound?”—  
His shipmates shut their een—  
A shriek of laughter burst—“From Hell!  
To the burial of Tralean!”  
Straight on it sped, and coloured  
The vext wave in its flying  
With changing tint, like those that glint  
The back o’ the dolphin dying;  
Straight on it steered, nor tacked, nor veered,  
Till to the Cove Tralean it neared,  
Then vanished from their eying.

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FYTTE THE SIXTH.

ARGUMENT.

Earl Sellis is an old name in the countryside, so that there be many to follow the corse, notwithstanding the overcoming might of the storm and the strange wind that ever withstands their progress onward. In all living creatures the lesser fear is swallowed up of the greater, and birds of alien and diverse natures companion together, even on the hearse, till the bird of ill omen displaces them; whereupon the bier is arrested on

Strumnock Brig; for no charm, though of the strongest, may avail further than the midst of a running stream. Verily, prayer is the true ladder of Jacob, whereupon angels go up and down, and it is seen to be so by every one whose head is brought low, and pillowed on the hard stone; and through it comes all deliverance.

In Tralean Hall the mourners all  
    (As in a bygone verse  
I told) were met: all things prepared,  
Forth from the castle gate they fared,  
    The dead earl in his hearse.  
The noon might well be matched with night;  
    Meanwhile, with furious dunt,  
A roaring wind did buffet them  
    And ever seemed in front;  
Wend as they might that roaring wind  
    Was ever in their front.

It felled down trees athwart their path,  
    No birds might perch on sprays,  
But on the wings of that strong wind  
    Were hurtled divers ways.  
And some dazed blind by those keen fires  
    The air was filled withal,  
Lost fear of man in mightier fear,  
    And perched upon the pall,  
In midst of that great train of men,  
Though wont on moor, or beach, or glen,  
    To fly the urchin's "tshew!"

Together cowered the cushet dove,  
The kite, and shy seamew,  
With blackbird, pyet, throssel, rook,  
Erst never seen in crew.

Till with a dismal clang of wings  
There swooped a raven down  
Upon the bier—but ere he lit,  
Each other bird had flown.  
It hath, I wist, in ages all  
Been bird of omen ill,  
And now upon old Strumnock Brig  
The earl's hearse stood still!  
Six big-boned Flanders mares were yoked  
But naught could they prevail,  
Against the charm that held them there  
Their strength might not avail,  
Nor voice, nor scourge, nor spur could urge  
Them forward for a thraw;  
The hearse stood still, all hearts were chill  
With an eerie sense of awe.  
Mad with the force of many burns,  
In current fierce and heady,  
The Strumnock raved and roared amain;  
As 'twere a snake in mortal pain,  
It writhed and coiled, it seethed and boiled  
In many a hoary eddy.

In all that train of frozen men  
But one had voice to pray,  
'Twas he who read the Holy Word  
Upon the Sabbath Day.  
"O God! when Thy fierce jealousy  
Is kindled into wrath,  
We are as worms beneath Thy feet,  
As stubble in Thy path;  
Our hearts melt in us, with strong fear  
Our very souls decay,  
Where is our strength, or who our help,  
If Thou be not our stay?  
And oh! if in Thy justest wrath  
To save Thou dost deny;  
Give us but light, Thy blessed light!  
Give us but light to die!  
Turn not Thy face away from us,  
Thou God who rul'st on high!"

Thereat a burst of levin-light  
Girt heaven as with a zone;  
As 'twere the welkin cloven in twain,  
And there came streaming down amain  
The light that hides the throne.  
Blind for a space the mourners stood,  
And when again the hearse they viewed,  
The evil bird had flown.

Then, like a sapling pinned to earth,  
When loosened from the strain,  
With eager start leapt every heart  
Back to its place again.  
Nor scourge nor spur could urge or stir  
The steeds, until His name  
Was uttered by the holy man,  
In thunder and in flame.  
But now they started with their load,  
And it was easy work,  
Easily, easily haled they it  
On to the village kirk.  
They laid him in the Sellis vault,  
The vault beside the porch,  
With the thunder for a coronach,  
The lightning for a torch!

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FYTTE THE SEVENTH.

ARGUMENT.

Very solacing are the words of the wise man, "There is a time to die." Yea! the weariness of life endures not for evermore, for unto all is appointed a rest and a soft slumber after the heat and burden of the day; and as each worker has stoutly and faithfully filled up his apportioned time, so it is the more welcome, and comes upon him with a high music, in its very stillness more to be desired than the concord of many harpers harping cunningly on their harps.

All still he lies in that dank vault,  
And ever still hath lain,  
Still, calm, and still! though minstrel play  
Death's song in many a divers way:  
Still, calm, and still! this ever will  
Be burden of the strain.

The kirk around, in the churchyard ground  
Lie buried many folk,  
And their silence speechful is, as if  
A trump-tongued angel spoke;  
And is it not, in sooth, a voice  
That Azrael hath spoke?  
And oft I walk in the kirkyard  
At the pleasant hour of noon,  
When there's not a cloud to fleck the breadth  
Of the azure sky of June:  
And oftentimes I walk therein  
Beneath the bending moon,  
And when I walk therein, my soul  
Saith with a yearning sigh,  
"Both one and all, or great or small,  
How peacefully they lie!"

Under the golden sunshine,  
In the happy summer-time,  
And on the raw-cold winter morn,  
Under the silver rime:

Or cold or warm, in calm or storm,  
They ne'er are stirred or started;  
How silently and still they lie,  
All these old departed!

And oft I think, what time my brain  
Is full of old-world fancies,  
Surely this many-aiming world  
Is but a hall of dances.  
After the gillie-callum,  
After the blythe strathspey,  
After the circle-dance, or reel,  
All hasten the same way;  
After the quick-tript morrice,  
After the stately pavan,  
They take their fill of welcome rest  
In this quiet haven.

Or slow or swift the pace or shift,  
The changing and the doubling,  
Their dancing done, all lie at one,  
Untroubled, and untroubling.  
He who oppressed, and they who bore,  
All calmly lie together,  
And, fardel-freed, nor note nor heed  
The rain or sunny weather.

As one who bravely lived and died,  
Large-hearted Raleigh, has it,  
Pride's pomp, scorn's scoff, hate's self-torment,  
Joy's smile, Faith's carriage placid,  
All hid and sepulchred beneath  
These twain dead words, "*Hic jacet.*"\*

O Fancy! who hast woven my strain,  
Be thy glance homeward slanted;  
O Soul! thy yearning after quiet  
Will not be ever thwarted:  
Be calm in hope. How still they lie,  
All these old departed!

\* "O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered all over with these two narrow words, *Hic Jacet.*"—Sir Walter Raleigh, "History of the World."





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